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#16  
Nantucket Historical  
Association I  
General, Gams



No. 601  
FOR REFILL, ASK FOR  
No. 611





Nantucket  
Historical  
Association.

I.

General  
Gaming







## Nantucket HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

To the Nantucket People, Resident and Non-resident, and the General Public:—

Our Society being now an established fact, and comprising already about ninety members, our first duty is to make an earnest appeal to the people at home and abroad for that support without which no historical association can prosper.

We appeal with confidence to that pride in our Island's history, and that love for all that pertains to its honorable past, its ancestry, literature traditions that is inbred in all loyal Nantucketers.

We desire to map out clearly and briefly our plans for the coming season. Our treasury being as yet very limited, we have deemed it advisable to keep expenses as low as possible. We have been fortunate in securing the use of two rooms in the "Reuben Joy Homestead," corner of Main and Gardner Sts. at a trifling rental, (the owners being deeply interested in the movement). In these rooms it is proposed to place as choice a collection as possible of articles of historic interest, to be opened to the public about July 1st for the season.

### LOAN EXHIBITION.

A small admission fee will be charged, one or more of the committee being in attendance.

Our space being limited to these two rooms, it will be necessary to choose from the articles offered such as will be most interesting to the public, and insure an attractive exhibit. In view of this fact, we trust that those who offer articles that we cannot find place for in this exhibition will make due allowance for our limitations.

### PERMANENT COLLECTION.

We would announce also that we shall be prepared to receive and be duly grateful for any and all articles that may be presented to the Association to form the nucleus of a permanent collection. From these selections will be made for the exhibition and the balance stored in the best place available.

We shall of course be glad to receive gifts of money as well, as these would enable us to purchase very desirable articles that are from time to time offered.

### TO INTENDING CONTRIBUTORS.

Any person desiring to contribute to either the Loan Exhibition or to the Permanent Collection is requested to (1) write a brief description (giving names and points of historical interest) of each article, whether it be furniture, picture, document, &c., &c. (2) To carefully specify whether the article is intended as a gift to the Association, or merely as a loan. *It is important* to have this point clearly understood in entering the articles on our records.

All possible care will be taken of everything contributed.

### PLEASE NOTICE.

Before sending in the articles it is requested that intending contributors send the descriptive notes (as above suggested) signed with their names, to any of the undersigned members of the Receiving Committee, and await a response:

MISS SUSIE E. BROCK,  
MR. WENDELL MACY,  
MR. H. S. WYER,  
MISS MARY E. MACY,  
MRS. M. S. DUDLEY,  
DR. GEO. H. GARDNER,  
MR. ROBERT B. KING,  
MR. A. H. SEAVERN,  
MRS. A. H. SEAVERN,  
MRS. M. W. VALENTINE.

Je9-4t

The meeting of the Historical Society was held at the West Room of the Athenaeum on Tuesday evening last. It was decided to postpone a public meeting until 1873, when it is expected that the enthusiasm of the Alumni gathering will have an excellent influence on the condition of the Society. Several papers were presented which it was decided to have published in our columns under the head of "Doings of the Nantucket Historico-Genealogical Society," and we shall commence their publication in our next issue. Other papers are in course of preparation and will tend to render the meeting of '73—which we trust will be more public—of great interest to all who have a regard for the Island's history.

For The Inquirer and Mirror.

Mr. Editor:

Two months ago there was published in your paper an account of the organization of the Nantucket Historical Association. It may be of interest to some of your readers to know what has been done since that time. The Society has become incorporated, and has now a membership of one hundred and thirty. At the harmonious and interesting meeting of last Wednesday, the resignations of the temporary officers were received, and the non-residents reinstated. Dr. Sidney Mitchell of Chicago, was unanimously elected President—an honor which he accepted with his customary dignity and grace. Though he is here only during the summer, the association is to be congratulated upon having at its head a man so cultivated, so widely known, and one who is so true a representative of old Nantucket, and who by ancestry and sentiment is wholly an Islander. A vote of thanks, richly deserved, was given Mr. Dudley—two members rising simultaneously to make the motion—for his untiring efforts in behalf of the society, which owes so much both to him and to his able and faithful co-worker, Mr. Henry Wyer. Mr. Andrew J. Morton was made (in recognition of his help in procuring the charter) a life member of the association. In his acknowledgment, he stated at once that he could not make a speech, and then delightfully disproved his assertion. Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck continued her special work of cheering and encouraging, by reading us a little article from her own pen, showing the value of enthusiasm.

The president recommended the buying of the Fair Street Meeting-House, as an old and valuable landmark, and also to serve temporarily as headquarters for the society. A motion was made that the life membership be reduced to fifteen dollars, and that these fees should be devoted to the building fund. Seven persons immediately gave their names for life membership, viz: Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell, Mr. George B. Upton, Miss Susan Starbuck, Miss Annie Folger, Mr. H. S. Wyer, Mr. H. P. Starbuck, Mrs. Judith Mitchell. The council was authorized to take steps toward purchasing the Meeting House, which it is hoped we shall be able to buy during the summer, since it needs but a thousand dollars, and we are already well along on the second hundred; for besides two life memberships, there have been several donations, one at least, "just for John Boadle's sake."

Early in August the by-laws and list of original members will be printed, and anyone desirous of becoming a charter member has only to send a dollar to the treasurer, Mr. Seaverns, with the understanding of course that he is to send a like sum yearly.

I would again call attention to the fact that all who care for the island and its traditions are welcome. The satisfaction of being a Nantucketer is not for all the world, and we would mitigate, as far as possible, the lot of those less fortunate than ourselves, by instructing them in our past history and by sharing with them the privilege of perpetuating its memory.

M. E. S.

## Special Meeting of Nantucket Historical Association.

The usual interesting incidents characterized the special meeting of the Historical Association Friday week, in the North Vestry. The president, Dr. J. S. Mitchell presided. The principal business was the revising of the constitution in preparation for a new issue, the first edition being nearly exhausted. All the changes were verbal. Mr. Dudley spoke of the origin and growth of the association. He began by stating that what he had to say was introductory to a motion, and that the entering wedge which opened the way for a suggestion of a historical society as a desirable institution for this island, was a letter from Mrs. Owen, of Springfield, Mass., dated October 27, 1892, referring to portraits in the vestry of the Old South meeting-house, and to photographs, in the Athenaeum, of wall-paper on the rooms of a house on Union street. This letter was read at the annual meeting of the Athenaeum, January 2, 1893. This opportunity was used to suggest the great need there was here of an institution to gather the material of the unique and interesting history of the past that was rapidly being destroyed or disappearing from the island. As a result, it was voted to raise a committee of five to consider the advisability of organizing a historical society under the auspices of the Athenaeum. This committee, as entered in the records of the meeting, was composed of the following persons: Myron S. Dudley, Allen Coffin, Harry Platt, Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck, Mrs. Charlotte C. Pearson. Several attempts to hold a full session of the committee failed on account of the inclemency of the weather. At last the not unknown plan was adopted of submitting the draft of a provisional constitution to the committee individually, for them to suggest changes and improvements, and to sign if they saw fit. The constitution used as a basis of the one submitted to the committee with only slight alterations, was that of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, in Deerfield, Mass. This constitution, with its erasures and changes, is now in possession of the society. It was signed by every member of the committee, and submitted to the shareholders of the Athenaeum at their annual meeting, January 1, 1894. It was voted that no action should be taken till the committee held a formal meeting. It was also voted that a room in the Athenaeum be allowed, without charge, to those who desired to hold meetings for the purpose of organizing a historical society. Several attempts were made to hold meetings in the library-room, but without success, as it was the conviction that a fairly good number should become interested in the beginning of this movement, otherwise the prospect of success would be slight. One person was always at these meetings when few others cared to be or could be present. This was a lady who afterward became the first contributor to the museum of the Historical Association. While the movement seemed to hang in suspense, and to grow increasingly discouraging, this lady was repeatedly asking, "When are we going to have that historical society started?" At length this lady promptly adopted a suggestion that was made to her. She opened her parlors and sent invitations to people who might be interested. She furnished a carriage to distribute these invitations, and, when the evening came, the parlors were full. The Historical Association of Nantucket became an accomplished fact. The very people that were needed to assure success were present, and most of them gave their names, and since the date of that gathering in the parlors of Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck, have been earnest and enthusiastic workers in the Association. Mr. Dudley then moved that Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck be made a life councillor of the Association, and finished by saying that, but for her assistance he doubted if the Nantucket Historical Association would be in existence today. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Miss C. L. French, who contributed the \$135, needed to make up the balance for the purchase of the "old mill," the association having already in the bank for that object, \$750.00, expressed a desire that Mr. Dudley and herself be made life councillors of the Association. This was accordingly voted. The constitution provides that any person may become life councillor of the association by vote of that organization, upon payment of fifty dollars. Hon. Hiram Price, of Washington, D. C., having contributed fifty dollars to the purposes of the association, was also made a life councillor. He has since given five dollars toward the Whale Ship fund.

The erection of a fire-proof brick building next came up for discussion, and it was voted that a committee of five be appointed by the chair to take the requisite steps towards this object. The following were appointed such committee, Mr. Dudley, Dr. Sharp, C. C. Crosby, Mrs. Judith J. Fish, Miss Mary E. Starbuck. The next matter was the suggestion of securing a whale ship, to be fitted up with all the appliances for the whaling industry, to be preserved in our harbor, which once possessed the largest whaling fleet in the United States if not in the world, and now there is not a single craft left, nor the wreck of one. An interesting discussion followed. Mr. Abbott, of Cleveland, a new member, spoke with enthusiasm of this project, and fairly represented the interest of old Nantucketers and summer visitors living west of Hudson River. It was voted to refer this matter with full power to the Council of the association. Mrs. Masury, of Danvers, was then introduced by the President, Dr. Mitchell, and she spoke most entertainingly on the relationship of the work of the chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution to historical societies, showing their mutual helpfulness. Mention was made of the marking of twenty-five graves, through the aid of Messrs. Lewis, on the site of the old burial ground near Maxey's Pond, where the early settlers' monument was erected some years ago by the Coffin Reunion Association. The meeting then adjourned.

S. W. S.

### Donations.

The following donations have been made to the Historical Society since February last:

Photo. of Tristram Coffin medal, Mrs. T. W. Calder; Letchworth's sermons, Mrs. Chas. S. Cathcart; waiters, plates, tureen, pitcher, hair trunk, and china, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Stiles; Thaddeus of Warsaw, Miss Mary A. Ray; Photo. of Judge Charles J. Folger, Miss Christine Doig, Milwaukee, Wis.; account of fire of 1838, Charles W. Worth; The Independent Ledger, date of 1780, Mrs. B. C. Easton; lantern, Capt. John Killen; Laws of Nantucket Fire Department, George R. Folger; tongs (over one hundred years old) O. C. Chadwick; dimity pocket and barege veil, Mrs. Margaret Ewer Coffin; medicine chest of ship Planter; sand box used in Nantucket Institution for Savings for half a century; sand box used in Pacific Bank for fifty years; checks on Manufacturers' and Mechanics' Bank (dates of 1835 and 1836); Hon. Samuel A. Greebe, librarian of Mass. Hist. Soc., Boston; sketch of Tristram Coffin, Mrs. Charles H. Coffin; old Bible, Capt. Obed Swain; bust of Benjamin Franklin, Henry Paddock.

Apr. 25, 1896



### Historical Society.

Another meeting of this society was held in the Library of the Athenaeum last Monday evening, Rev. M. S. Dudley presiding.

Several new names were added to the membership, including Mrs. Eliza Mitchell, who has long been interested in historical and genealogical matters. Mrs. Mitchell offered to contribute some records and papers she possessed pertaining to the history of Nantucket.

The subject of electing a permanent President for the society was discussed, and an adjournment was reached without going into a choice.

The society fixed upon the Reuben Joy homestead, corner of Main and Gardner streets, as the place for temporary deposit of articles and manuscripts.

An art loan exhibit during the summer months for the purpose of raising funds was generally concurred in, but the details thereof were not determined.

Under proper and discreet management there can be no question of the ultimate growth and development of a historical society, which can collect a fund of valuable material in this line, and the good work has commenced none too soon.

### The Historical Association.

A meeting of the council of the Nantucket Historical Association was held in the Friends' meeting house on Fair street, Monday at four o'clock to consider the question of adopting a seal. Several designs were presented including symbolism appropriate to the history of Nantucket island. They were drawn by Mr. Alexander H. Seaverns in line with the various suggestions of the council.

The suggestions and designs were so numerous and the opinions concerning them so various that it was decided to postpone a decision until an adjourned meeting of the council to be held this (Thursday) afternoon. When adopted the seal will be engraved at Boston and will appear on the constitution and roll of officers which is now being printed. The council also authorized the purchase of an antique spectacle case, once the property of Ruth Coffin, and bearing her initials. The Indian skull recently exhumed on the Cliff was on exhibition. It is possible it may become the property of the Association and most certainly should.

For the Inquirer and Mirror.

Mr. Editor:

In the report of the recent annual meeting of the stockholders of the Athenaeum, the absence of an enterprising reporter was illustrated by the lack of proper attention given to one of the most important matters considered. This was the motion adopted appointing a committee to consider the feasibility of organizing a historical society. This movement started in connection with a motion for a vote of thanks to Mrs. Owen, of Springfield, for her gift of a photograph, referred to in her letter given below. The person who seconded this motion remarked upon the great need of an institution for the collection and preservation of records, material, etc., illustrating the past history of the island. The assembly responded cordially, and a committee was appointed as stated in your report last week. In a letter to her friend Mrs. Starbuck, received since the annual meeting, Mrs. Owen writes: "I have long wanted a historical society in Nantucket. I know there are treasures in old trunks, drawers, etc. yet, in spite of the ravages of the great fire."

M. S. D.

MRS. OWEN'S LETTER.

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., Oct. 27, 1892.

To the Stockholders of the Nantucket Athenaeum.

Dear friends:—The Old South Meeting-house in Boston, has been used of late years as a historical museum, or repository for objects of interest, illustrating the domestic life of our ancestors and the history of our country. I was walking through it, one day, inspecting the books and autographs, the old portraits and old furniture, articles of dress equally old and interesting, and the rest of the antiquities, when I came across something very familiar,—the wall paper (represented by photographs) that had been daily before my eyes from my babyhood to my marriage; the very paper selected in Boston by my grandfather, about the year 1818, for the new house he was building "under the bank." He bought it in two colors: in grays deepening to black for one room, in shades of blue for the other; this latter, now in its seventy-fourth year, remains on the walls to the present day. It was admired in its time,—it is worthy of admiration in this later period, for it was really good in design and execution. The scenery seems to be that of Southern Europe—Italy perhaps.

Seeing my old acquaintance in such distinguished company, I thought to myself, now if the paper is worth preserving in the Old South historical collection, it is worth keeping in Nantucket, and if I can get it photographed and the stockholders will accept the gift, the Athenaeum shall have it. Interested Miss Gertrude M. King in my plan, and she gave me kind and skilful help; Mr. Winn, the present owner of the house, gave her every facility in his power, and the work is well done—remarkably so—when the interference of the light from the windows is considered. I leave, then, the little gift with you, hoping that it may add somewhat to the interest of the museum or library, and although Nantucket is not now my home, I shall subscribe myself what I always am in heart, with high regard your townsman,

MARIA L. OWEN.

### A Munificent Offer.

Mr. Josiah Sturgis, formerly of Nantucket, but for many years a resident of Martinez, Cal., has offered to the Nantucket Improvement Association, through Mr. Daniel Vincent, all his interests on the island, consisting of about 250 acres of land (largely grown with pines) a part located in and about the Taupawasha road, near "Bug Light" and another tract on the east of the South Shore road. The offer is made with the proviso that the society assumes the trouble and expense of securing a transcript of the records.

At a meeting of the executive board Monday afternoon, it was voted to accept the gift, and notification has been sent Mr. Sturgis of its acceptance.

It is a generous deed of Mr. Sturgis, and all citizens will feel grateful to him, as well as congratulate the Improvement Society.

### Historical Society.

Another meeting of this society was held in the Library of the Athenaeum last Monday evening, Rev. M. S. Dudley presiding.

Several new names were added to the membership, including Mrs. Eliza Mitchell, who has long been interested in historical and genealogical matters. Mrs. Mitchell offered to contribute some records and papers she possessed pertaining to the history of Nantucket.

The subject of electing a permanent President for the society was discussed, and an adjournment was reached without going into a choice.

The society fixed upon the Reuben Joy homestead, corner of Main and Gardner streets, as the place for temporary deposit of articles and manuscripts.

An art loan exhibit during the summer months for the purpose of raising funds was generally concurred in, but the details thereof were not determined.

Under proper and discreet management there can be no question of the ultimate growth and development of a historical society, which can collect a fund of valuable material in this line, and the good work has commenced none too soon.

Correspondence of The Inquirer and Mirror.

Mr. Editor:

It is delightful to know that at last there is really a Nantucket Historical Association, and that it is proposed to finally use one of the old-time homes for its headquarters. I would not say quaint old homes if I wanted to, for I have been told on good authority that Nantucket people are very tired of the word quaint.

Visions of sugar bowls and teapots; platters and pitchers; old books and manuscripts; old furniture and silver, dance in my head. For even after all charming reminders of the olden time that have been carried away by the summer bric-a-brac hunter, there must still be articles tucked back in dark corners that will now be brought to the light. And other treasures that have given pleasure to a few people, will now be placed where they can be enjoyed by many more. It is to be hoped that there will be a fire-proof safe for the books and manuscripts at least.

### Nantucket Historical Society.\*

On Thursday evening of last week, a public meeting was held in the west room of the Athenaeum, which resulted in the organization of the Nantucket Historical Society, and the choice of a Board of Officers.

Rev. Dr. F. C. Ewer was chosen Chairman of the meeting, and Arthur E. Jenks, Secretary.

Dr. Ewer presented a draft of a Constitution, which, with but slight amendment, was unanimously adopted. The following is

### THE CONSTITUTION OF THE N. H. SOCIETY.

ORGANIZED AUG. 1869.

Article 1.—This Society shall be called the NANTUCKET HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Article 2.—The officers shall be a President, seven Vice Presidents, a Secretary, a Registrar, and a Treasurer.

Article 3.—The Registrar shall be the Curator of the Society's Room.

Article 4.—There shall be an Executive Committee which shall consist of the officers of the Society, and ten other members.

Article 5.—The officers of the Society shall be chosen at an Annual Meeting, which shall be convened in the month of August, each year, on a day to be designated by the Executive Committee.

Article 6.—Five members of the Executive Committee shall constitute its quorum, and ten members shall constitute a quorum of the Society.

Article 7.—Each member shall pay an annual fee of one dollar in advance. The payment of ten dollars shall secure a life membership.

Article 8.—Any member of the Society, in arrears, shall, at the call of any member who has paid his fees, forfeit his right to vote or hold office, unless his fees are paid to date.

Article 9.—The President shall have power to call special meetings of the Society. Each member shall receive written notification of all meetings; and when the meeting is designed to be public, notice shall also be given in the Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror.

Article 10.—This Constitution may be altered by a two-thirds vote at any Annual Meeting, or at any special meeting called for the purpose.

*Voted*, That a Committee of two retire and choose persons to fill the various offices, and Messrs. W. F. Mitchell and Alexander Starbuck were then appointed by the President.

The following are the officers as chosen:

*President of the Society*—Joseph S. Barney.

*Vice-Presidents*—Charles H. Starbuck, Geo. B. Upton, George H. Folger, Alexander Starbuck, William H. Macy, George H. Cary, and Alfred Bunker.

*Secretary*—Arthur E. Jenks.

*Treasurer*—Mrs. George Starbuck.

*Registrar*—William C. Folger.

*Executive Committee*—Alfred Macy, Frederick C. Sanford, Andrew Whitney, Henry D. Robinson, Edward R. Folger, Mrs. Susan Channing, Rev. Mrs. P. A. Hanaford, Miss Rebecca Watson, Mrs. George W. Wright, and Mrs. Alfred Macy.

On the election of officers, Mr. Alexander Starbuck took the chair.

*Voted*, That the Executive Committee be instructed to appoint sub-committees to prepare, during the coming year, papers upon the physical geography of the Island; the Indians; the early settlers; the agriculture; the fisheries; the manufactures; the religious, educational, political, social and genealogical interests of Nantucket.

*Voted*, That the Secretary notify each officer of his election.

*Voted*, That the Secretary prepare a report of the meeting of the Nantucket Historical Society, to be published in the Nantucket Inquirer and Mirror.

*Voted*, That the Executive Committee be authorized to pay the Registrar such a fee as they may deem advisable.

*Voted*, That the meeting adjourn.

ARTHUR E. JENKS, Secretary.

\*It will be remembered that the new History of Nantucket was made the subject of a very interesting discussion at the business meeting of the High School Alumni Association, on the morning of the 17th ult.; the theme, dear to many an Islander, was opportunely introduced by Mr. Alexander Starbuck, formerly of this town, now resident in Waltham. To him are we indebted for the establishment of what I believe is destined to become not the least celebrated among Nantucket's honorable institutions.

May 26, 1894

May 26, 1894

Sept. 27, 1894  
Journal

Sept. 4, 1869



One of the most delightful features of the meeting was the reading of a paper called "Our Beginnings" by Miss Mary Eliza Starbuck, who had written it especially for this occasion. It is always a pleasure to listen to Miss Starbuck, and we reprint portions of her paper as follows:

"Not unlike many another work the beginning of the Nantucket Historical Association seems to have been almost accidental.

In 1893, Mrs. Maria T. Owen, born and bred on Nantucket but at that time living in Springfield, happened to be in Boston. At a historical exhibition then being held in the Old North Meeting House, she saw among the antiques some wall paper identical with that on one of the rooms of her father's house in Nantucket. This house, built in 1818, is on the north corner of Union and Coffin streets.

It occurred to Mrs. Owen that, since the paper was of sufficient interest to be shown at such an exhibition, a photograph of that still on the wall of her former home might be acceptable to the Nantucket Atheneum. So, with the help of Miss Gertrude King, to whom she wrote at once, prints were made and together with Mrs. Owen's letter, were presented at the next Annual Proprietors' Meeting, held in the library of the Atheneum, where the Presiding Officer always sat under the bust of Socrates, while above the Secretary's chair Benjamin Franklin surveyed with disinterested urbanity the group of persons assembled, chiefly composed of his own relatives.

After a vote of thanks had been passed in recognition of Mrs. Owen's gift, a temerarious "stranger"—though he was a resident and the able pastor of the Congregational Church, in whose vestry we are now gathered—thought that it was an opportune moment to speak of a matter that had been long on his mind. He suggested widening the sphere of the Atheneum's activities by the formation of a Historical Chapter. There was no more thought of altering in any way the existing management of affairs than there was of starting a new society.

But a bomb had been dropped! Here was a proposition to tamper with a sacred institution! The reaction was instantaneous and unfavorable!

However, nothing was to be decided in haste, and in some way a committee was appointed to consider the feasibility of organizing a "historical and antiquarian department to be connected with the Atheneum." The report was to be given at the next Proprietors' Meeting. It was ready at the time appointed. But although this meeting voted that one of the rooms might be used for the meetings of the said committee, it was voted that the reading of the report should be deferred, and that "further consideration of the matter be laid on the table." It was not, however, allowed to lie there undisturbed for very long.

As soon as Mrs. Owen heard about the suggested new work she wrote with great enthusiasm to an old friend, one of the prominent women of the town. She said "I have long wanted a historical society in Nantucket. I know there are treasures still in the old trunks and desks, and in attics generally, in spite of the ravages of the Great Fire." Her Nantucket friend was not convinced. It was quite natural that those who as "young people" had seen the new Atheneum rising from the ashes of the former building destroyed by the fire, who had later on, as Trustees, directed its activities, then entirely suited to the needs of the town, should look with disfavor upon any suggestion of change—even an increase of work without alteration of that already in hand. No! The system was perfect. A change of any kind was not to be thought of!

However, it was true that a committee had been appointed to consider the matter, and by the time the next meeting of the Proprietors was called, two definitely opposing factions had come into existence, each with its chosen speaker. The meeting was far from noisy. Each leader had his chance, and amid dead silence had his say. The vote was called.

The Historical Chapter measure was voted down, and the Proprietors having "given their testimony," peace was restored. The Atheneum and its management were intact. A finished product was not to be tampered with, especially by off-islanders! This, remember, was forty years ago!

Somewhat cast down but by no means destroyed by the reception of their report, the projectors of this

historical-chapter idea reconsidered their original suggestion in favor of a more startling proposition. If a new department of an already existing organization was out of the question, why not form an independent society for the work whose importance was slowly becoming more apparent to some of the Nantucket men and women, even among the Proprietors of the Atheneum. Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck was from the first a strong ally of Mr. Dudley and as spring came on she felt that something must be done. So in May, 1894, in the "west parlor" of the westernmost of the three brick houses on Main street, a meeting was held of about thirty persons.

There was much talk and there were various degrees of interest, of optimism and of pessimism regarding the possibilities. A young man who was living here for a year or two, said that it wasn't any good to start such a society, for in twenty years there wouldn't be anybody on Nantucket anyway but a few fishermen and scallopers! He went away not long after that meeting, and we never heard of him again.

That night the Nantucket Historical Association was organized and the next week, at another meeting held in the same place, an executive board was chosen, consisting of:

Vice-Presidents—Rev. Myron S. Dudley, Henry S. Wyer.

Recording Secretary—Miss Mary E. Starbuck.

Corresponding Sec'y—Miss Susie Starbuck.

Treasurer—Alexander H. Seaverns. Councillors—Mrs. Maria T. Swain, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Bennett, Miss Susan E. Brock, Mrs. Judith J. Fish, Rev. Edward C. Gardner, Wendell Macy, Arthur H. Gardner.

No president was chosen. We begged Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck to serve as president. She was firm in her refusal and in her insistence that the president must be a man "so that he can wear a white waistcoat when he presides at the annual meetings!"

The energetic and invaluable Rev. Mr. Dudley was made first Vice-President, but there was a strong feeling that the President should be "one of our own." So we cast about for the right man. It was suggested that if Sidney Mitchell would accept the office "the thing would be sure to go." It was true that Dr. Mitchell lived in Chicago and was a busy man, but he came every summer with his family, and his life-long popularity in, and love for his birthplace were well-known. Dr. Mitchell agreed to serve and remained President until his death.

An article was written for The Inquirer and Mirror relating to the new organization. And then came the question of the location of the Museum that we already saw in our imaginations. The first plan of renting two rooms in the Reuben Joy Homestead was soon given up. We wanted a building of our own

It happened that about that time the two or three remaining members of the Wilburite Quakers had become too old and infirm to hold meetings in the Meeting House on Fair Street, and there was a rumor that certain possible purchasers were considering its acquisition and planning to alter it out of all resemblance to a Quaker Meeting House. We didn't have the money to buy it, but it seemed to the Council that this old and valuable landmark should be preserved, and that it would suit our purposes with no alteration, until we could buy, or build, later on if our needs ever required. Small donations began to come in, and a few hundred dollars were on hand when we ventured to purchase the Old Meeting House. Two or three friends of the new organization went on notes for one or two hundred dollars apiece and one of the banks was willing to take a mortgage on the property. We had already obtained our charter, and so two months after that first meeting at Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck's house, fully equipped and "all clear" we took the water, with a membership of one hundred and thirty. Seven of these who were present at the meeting of July 25th, 1894, became life-members, viz.—Dr. J. Sidney Mitchell, Henry S. Wyer, my brother, Henry P. Starbuck, George B. Upton, Miss Susie Starbuck, Mrs. Judith Mitchell and Miss Annie Barker Folger. Another article was written for the local paper, I quote its last paragraph, it has never ceased to be timely:

"I would again call attention to the fact that all who care for the Island and its traditions are welcome as members of the Association. The satisfaction of being a Nantucketer is not for all the world, and we would mitigate, as far as possible, the lot of those less fortunate than ourselves, by instructing them in our past history, and by sharing with them the privilege of perpetuating its memory."

#### \$3,000 to Historical Association.

The Nantucket Historical Association receives from the estate of the late Alexander Starbuck, a large and valuable collection of historic matter and also a bequest of \$3,000 which is to be known as the Ella M. Starbuck fund. The bequest comes to the Association in the shape of United States government bonds.

#### Nantucket Historical Society.

About thirty ladies and gentlemen met by invitation at the residence of Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck Wednesday evening, 9th inst., to consider the advisability of forming an historical society, which after discussion it was voted to do and a constitution and by-laws adopted. The meeting adjourned for one week to this (Wednesday) evening at the same place to elect officers and take further steps in the matter, and a general invitation is extended to all interested in the subject to be present and participate, or if unable to be present any desirous of joining can send in their names. Meeting at 8 o'clock.

May 17, 1894



## Historical Association to Benefit by Will of Admiral Folger.

The Nantucket Historical Association becomes a beneficiary under the will of Admiral William Mayhew Folger, late of Cornish, N. H., which was filed for probate at Claremont, in the county of Sullivan, on the fourteenth of August.

The Nantucket Association is to receive such prints, statuary, etc., as its representative may select, who is to be sent to Cornish for the purpose; also three silver ships, a log-book, certificates, portraits, etc., named by the testator in the will.

It also becomes the beneficiary of a trust fund, upon the death of the daughter and the sister of Admiral Folger, which is to be known as the "Peter Foulger Fund", to be under the control of the officers of the Association and with the expressed purpose of erecting a building similar to that known in Nantucket as the Coffin School.

The will of Admiral Folger will naturally arouse some curiosity as to the connection which he had with Nantucket. It was through the family name of Folger and the fact that his ancestors were Nantucketers, although he himself was not born here.

This branch of the Folger family were probably among the Nantucket people who immigrated to Ohio, as "Who is Who in America" states that Admiral Folger was born in Massillon, Ohio, on the 19th of May, 1844, the son of Robert and Amelia (Hayden) Folger. He was appointed to the United States Naval Academy from Ohio and graduated in 1864. He was promoted to the rank of ensign in 1866 and thereafter was rapidly advanced in rank becoming a commander in 1885, a captain in 1898, and a rear-admiral in 1904. He had a wide range of duty in both American and foreign waters, also serving as lighthouse inspector for several districts at different periods in his career. In 1898 he was placed in command of the Philippine squadron of the Asiatic fleet; and was in command of the Asiatic fleet when he retired from active duty in 1905. Since his retirement he has lived at Windsor, Vermont.

The terms of the will are of more than ordinary interest and reveal the careful forethought of Admiral Folger in disposing of his estate, which is said to be quite extensive. All who are interested in Nantucket, and especially in the Nantucket Historical Association, will probably read the document with great interest, a copy of which is appended herewith:

### LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

In the name of God, in whom I believe, I, William Mayhew Folger, Gentlemen, an officer on the retired list of the United States Navy, now a resident of Cornish in the State of New Hampshire, mindful of the uncertainty of life and of the certainty of death, do make, publish and declare this to be my last Will and Testament.

First. I hereby nominate, constitute and appoint my daughter, Margaret Hayden Folger, and the corporation known as the Windsor County Trust Company, of Windsor, in the State of Vermont, to be the Executors of this Will and the Trustees of the Trust Fund hereinafter established. It is my desire that my said daughter shall not be required to furnish bonds as such executrix and the Windsor County Trust Company be required to furnish the bond required by the Laws of the State of Vermont. If my daughter shall die before the expiration of

the terms of the trust hereinafter established the Trust Fund shall be administered by the remaining member of the Board of Executors or Trustees until such time as the said trust by its terms shall terminate.

Second. I direct my Executors to pay my debts, (these are probably nominal) and my funeral expenses. I desire to be buried (with military honors, which I believe can be obtained on application to the Commandant of the Navy Yard in Boston) beside the remains of my late wife, Eleanor Gilmour Folger, in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Mass. And I desire that a granite stone, similar but slightly smaller to that marking the grave of my wife be erected, with this inscription:

William Mayhew Folger,  
Rear Admiral United States Navy  
1844 —

Third. I give to my sister, Mary F. Lang, one hundred dollars if she be alive at my death. Also she may select from my books in the English Language twenty-five volumes. Also a bronze statuette of Buddha. I request that she assist at the inventory of my effects.

Fourth. I give my daughter, Margaret Hayden Folger, the sideboard in the dining room of the Cornish residence. This I purchased from the heirs of the Tench Tilghman Estate on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. It was said to have been brought from England by a Lt. Col. Tench Tilghman on the Staff of George Washington. I request my daughter to bequeath this sideboard to John McGregor of Cleveland, Ohio.

Fifth. I give to Griswold Hayward my four shot guns. This is to return, in part, many kindnesses from his mother to my late wife.

Sixth. I give to Mrs. George W. Hayward two chairs and a table in the lower main hall of the dwelling house.

Seventh. I give to the Library of the Town of Windsor (Vermont) an etching of Windsor Castle now in my library in the Cornish residence.

Eighth. I give to the Library of the Town of Nantucket, (Mass.) all of my books not mentioned heretofore in this instrument.

Ninth. I give the (Museum) of the Historical Association of Nantucket, (Nantucket Historical Association) such of my prints, statuary, naval and marine, as their representative, sent to Cornish for that purpose, may select. I will mention the following:

- (a) The old English and American Naval Battles.
- (b) The Mutiny of the Bounty.
- (c) Pictures of Franklin at "Lords in Council" and at Versailles.
- (d) Bust of Franklin (after Houdon) formerly the property of George Bancroft.
- (e) The old print of the bombardment of Ft. McHenry (West Wing corridor).
- (f) The photograph of Julia Ward Howe with the verse in her handwriting. This was given to be by Mrs. Howe herself.
- (g) The vases on mantle in Hall.

I reserve from this gift certain pictures, which are marked on the back for the heirs of the late Eleanor G. Folger. They reside at 3829 Howe street, Oakland, California.

Tenth. I give to the Nantucket Historical Association:

- (a) The three silver ships.
- (b) The log book of my Grandfather, Captain Mayhew Folger, of the ship Topaz of Boston. This log-book contains Captain Folger's record of finding the descendants of the original mutineers of the "Bounty". If for any reason the Nantucket Historical Association should cease, or have ceased, to exist at the time of my death I give this log book to the Massachusetts Historical Society.
- (c) My certificate of graduation at the U. S. Naval Academy.
- (d) My commission as Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance.
- (e) My commission as Rear Admiral in the U. S. Navy.
- (f) The Letter of Commendation from President Harrison. (Framed in one with the Commission as Chief of Bureau of Ordnance).
- (g) The Letter of Commendation from the Steamer Lines using New York waters. (In safe).

(h) The Letters of Commendation from the New York Yacht Club.

(i) The portrait of myself in oil.

(j) The photographs of four Presidents of the United States each with a personal inscription.

Eleventh. I give to George M. Gilmour and to his wife, each one thousand dollars, these sums to be taken from my Naval Life Insurance. If either or both of them die before I do then this sum or one half as the case may be I give to their daughter Mrs. Eleanor Bissell. This sum is the cash remaining after paying the money bequests made by my late wife, Eleanor Gilmour Folger to her relatives and by her will bequeathed to myself.

Twelfth. I give to my friend Mr. Maxfield Parrish of Cornish, New Hampshire, the old Hall Clock standing on the Southern Staircase.

Thirteenth. I give to Charles H. Davis, U. S. N., son of my very dear friend Rear Admiral C. H. Davis, U. S. N., the water color picture representing the Cheasapeake and Shannon fight. It was purchased by me in London—was said to be by an officer in the Royal Navy. It has the peculiarly valuable feature of showing the English ship continuing to fire although the American Flag was being lowered. (This is historically the fact, but due to the re-opening of the fire after official surrender by the American Commander.)

Fourteenth. I give to W. H. Ford, if living, all my clothing and shoes (not uniforms).

Fifteenth. There will be found enclosed with this instrument a letter signed by my late wife, marked (\*) containing her directions regarding the distribution of certain items of her property after my death. I desire that her wishes be strictly complied with. They relate principally to clothing, silver, furniture, china and pictures. Certain of her wishes have already been complied with as indicated in the letter.

Sixteenth. A legacy to be left me by the will of my sister Elizabeth L. Folger, is to be added to the assets of the Trust Fund hereinafter created.

Seventeenth. All the rest and remainder of my real estate and personal property of whatever kind and nature I do hereby give, devise and bequeath to my Trustees hereinbefore named and appointed, their successors and assigns, upon trust however for the following purposes. To sell the real estate, securities, live stock on the farm and the contents of the houses and barns at such times and places as in the opinion of the majority of the executors, having due regard to the laws bearing on the subject, as may be done with financial advantage and safety. And for this purpose shall execute all such assurances and conveyances as they shall think fit. The house at Cornish is not to be occupied by any person (prior to its sale) of my kinship, nor shall it be sold to any of my kinship. On all questions of investments of the funds created by this trust I direct that the

Windsor County Trust Company shall have two votes and thus control this feature. My property at the time of the execution of this Will consists of land, houses, barns, farm tools, live stock, engines, pumps, furniture and household furniture in Cornish, N. H., Securities in the hands of Messrs. Kidder Peabody & Co., in Boston, Mass., and in my safe deposit box in the Windsor County Trust Co's. building in Windsor, Vermont. There is also a cash bank account in the Windsor County Trust Company. My life is insured in the Navy Mutual Aid Association for something more than five thousand dollars. The beneficiary last named for this insurance was my wife, Eleanor Gilmour Folger since deceased. I now name Mr. H. P. McClary, Treasurer of the Windsor Savings Bank—as agent-beneficiary of said Navy Mutual Aid Association policy in trust however to pay the proceeds of said policy to the Trustees hereinbefore named to form a part of the trust fund hereby established.

I also direct my trustees to invest all the funds that may come into their hands by virtue of this trust in interest bearing securities and that the income of said fund be divided quarterly between my daughter, Margaret H. Folger and my sister, Elizabeth L. Folger in equal shares. At the death of either of them the one half the income of the trust fund that the deceased had been receiving shall be thereafter deposited in the Windsor Savings Bank for final disposition with its accumulations as hereinafter described.

Eighteenth. Upon the death of the two beneficiaries of the above created trust, Margaret H. Folger and Elizabeth L. Folger, the participation of the Windsor County Trust Company shall cease and the entire Trust Fund capital and interest I give to the Nantucket Historical Association of Nantucket, Mass.: provided however that the following conditions are accepted by the Nantucket Historical Association, viz:—The Bequest to be administered as a "fund" to be known as the "Peter Foulger Fund" in order to perpetuate the name of Peter Foulger. Said fund is to be under the control of the President, Vice-Presidents and Board of Councillors of the Association (Nantucket Historical Association). The property to be invested, the interest re-invested as capital until such time as a building similar to that known in Nantucket as the Coffin School, (the institution endowed by Sir Isaac Coffin, Vice-Admiral, Royal Navy) may be built in the town of Nantucket and adequately endowed as a Historical Association.

I desire that no additions to this fund be accepted from any other descendant of Peter Foulger. It is to be understood that this fund is to be administered as herein described or it is to be applied as hereinafter provided. Exception:—The Board of Control of this fund is hereby given the privilege of using, at its discretion, the sum of one hundred dollars per annum for the purposes of the Association.

Nineteenth. In event of the Board of Control of the Nantucket Historical Association declining to receive the bequest above described under the conditions named I give the fund, the Capitol in the hands of the Windsor County Trust Company, after the death of Margaret H. Folger and Elizabeth L. Folger to the Prefect of the Dept. of Ille et Vilaine in France, (to be transmitted through the French Ambassador to the United States,) to be administered by the Council of this Department for the benefit of the wounded in the war of 1914-15-16-etc., who are natives of the Department of Ille et Vilaine.

In case any beneficiary under the terms of this instrument shall institute legal proceedings in order to change its terms in any detail he or she shall be barred from any pecuniary benefit therefrom as expressed in this my Will. A substantial income is given to my daughter, Margaret H. Folger, in order to prevent such litigation.

This Will is in substantial accord with a Will made by me on May 29th, 1915, and is re-executed on June 2nd, 1917, and now re-copied, slightly altered, in 1924.

In Testimony Whereof I hereunto set my hand and seal and do publish and declare this to be my last Will and Testament, at Windsor, in the County of Windsor, and State of Vermont, on this first day of August, 1924.

William Mayhew Folger, (Seal).

Signed, Sealed, Published and Declared by the said William Mayhew Folger as his Last Will and Testament, in the presence of us, who have hereunto subscribed our names, as witnesses thereto, at the request and in the presence of the said testator and in the presence of each other at Windsor, in the County of Windsor, this 1st day of August, A. D., 1924.

Ethel M. Fecteau,  
M. Louise Phillips,  
Gilbert F. Davis,



## Nantucket Historical Association —What it is Doing.

"Have you ever been into the Historical Rooms?"

"No, I've intended to, but never got about it."

"Nor I either," responded the first speaker, "but I mean to."

Chancing to overhear the above conversation the other day between two business men in town, suggested the thought how many of our citizens have never availed themselves of the opportunity to inspect this rare and wonderful collection of relics and curios identified with the history and traditions of our island?

For twenty-five years and more the Historical Association has been quietly gathering for preservation these souvenirs of by-gone days, each one of which has its separate history, while all combined aggregate associations and reminiscences stretching backward to the settlement of the island.

Starting in 1894 in a single room of a private residence, this collection has grown with succeeding years until today it crowds the floor space, corridors and walls of the two-story and basement fireproof building erected ten years later, and which must shortly undergo enlargement to relieve the growing congestion.

In its scope and variety the collection is identified with the domestic life of the island, its maritime history, commerce, manufacturing industries, literature, art, and agriculture, and includes Indian relics, maritime products and curios from distant lands and seas brought home by ancient mariners from every quarter of the globe.

Naturally whatever pertains to the whaling industry is a continual source of interest, particularly to visitors from inland states—the massive sperm whale's jaw with all its teeth intact, the models of full-rigged ships and outfits, native war clubs, bows and spears and other death-dealing weapons from cannibal islands of the South Sea archipelago, and wondrous specimens of "scrimshawing" done on shipboard.

From the realm of domestic life are shown the crude household utensils of the hardy pioneers—the home-made cradle, the spinning wheel operated by the busy housewife with one foot on the rocker, the antique furniture brought from overseas, specimens of needle craft in profuse variety, rare old crockery and silverware, the bellows which coaxed the latent fire to a ruddy glow, the warming-pan, which tempered the chill of the winter bed, and countless articles of use in their day and generation that graced the homes of our ancestors.

From the walls on every hand portraits of old-time sea captains in quaint costume, town officials and prominent citizens, men and women of other days look down upon the present generation, to many of whom they are known only by tradition, while hundreds of photographs of persons and places tactfully displayed in the art gallery bring forcibly to mind familiar faces and well-remembered scenes of later date.

For the student and antiquarian a library rich in historic and genealogical lore offers fascinating research. Scores of log books tell their daily records of storms and calms and veering winds, interspersed with sentimental poetry and embellished with rude prints from wooden stamps illustrative of captured whales and stoven boats and other events incident to a whaler's life.

Here also may be found rare old manuscripts and ancient deeds dating back to the settlement of the island—in fact the original deed of purchase itself and other ancient documents and journals of priceless value.

In the basement are to many some of the most interesting features of the collection, including specimens of crude agricultural implements used by our ancestors, whaling gear direct from shipboard, an old-time loaded oil truck, a model of the famous "camels" with a whaleship in their embraces, ancient vehicles, an old-time "hand-tub" that did valiant service in the "Great Fire" of '46, sea turtle and terrapin shells from the Gallapagos island, the gilded eagle and other souvenirs from steamer Island Home and numerous other interesting trophies.

Adjoining the fire-proof building and in contrast with its "vain display" is the plain old-time Quaker school house of John Boadle, in later years transformed into the Friends' meeting house and preserved in all its quaint and pristine simplicity, just as it was left by the last survivors of that once predominant religious sect on the island. Here without the aid of "hireling priests" our Quaker ancestors drew inspiration from the inner light and spake as the spirit moved or sat the sitting out in silent meditation.

The foregoing is but a skeleton outline of what is to be found within the walls of the historical building—a museum of antiquities, a wonderful collection of curios in art, science and manufacture and a library of historic and genealogical data. Thousands of "off-islanders" annually find many hours of fascination wandering through its corridors, but singular as it may appear, a large majority of our local residents seem hardly aware of its existence—at least have never visited it.

It would seem that all of us to the manor born should have an abiding interest in the history and traditions of our island home, its present prosperity and its future development. Much that it might be of interest or value to recall, has passed into oblivion and is lost beyond recovery. To

guard against more slipping away, to resurrect when possible and to cherish and preserve what has been recovered is the special province of the Historical Association. And this brings me to the real subject of this article to which the foregoing is but an elongated preamble.

What I started out to ask the reader of this article is: Are you a member of the Nantucket Historical Association? And if not, why not? Is it because you are not a Nantucketer and have no pride in her past or interest in her future? Such is hardly conceivable, for those who became citizens by adoption, even temporarily, catch the spirit of Nantucket's traditions and are among its most loyal sons and daughters.

If you are a native-born Nantucketer and not a member, is it because you haven't given the matter much thought? That it hasn't been brought particularly to your attention? If so think it over. Perhaps you may say you are not interested in such matters? Well, if you aren't you ought to be, particularly if you are identified with the business, official, or educational life of your native town. Your ancestors put it on the map, your progenitors kept it there and you should esteem it a privilege to co-operate in whatever tends to perpetuate the memory of them and their achievements.

It isn't because you can't afford it, for membership costs but a couple of pennies a week (\$1.00 a year) and entitles you to free access to the historical rooms when open, and all privileges and benefits of the association, including its annual reports and participation in its very interesting meetings.

The society cordially invites you to join, not so much for its benefit, as yours, though of course the larger its membership the greater the scope of its activities.

Arthur H. Gardner.  
Nantucket, April 25, 1923.

## Old Nantucket Bibles.

The old records of births, marriages, and deaths in the town of Nantucket, from the beginning of the town to the year 1850, are to be published by the New England Historic Genealogical Society of Boston, under an Act of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As is often the case, the town records are incomplete, and it is the custom, in publishing, to add the records found in the old family Bibles. Due credit is given, in the volume of printed records, to the owners of the Bibles so used. The favor will be greatly appreciated if those having such Bibles would carry them to Miss Ida Cathcart, 40 Orange street, or Miss Emma Cook, 4 Quince street, that they may be copied, or send word to either where and when it would be convenient to call and make a copy of the Bible. Such co-operation will be of valuable assistance in making the Nantucket Vital Records as complete as possible, especially in the record of births, which are very few in the early town books.

## Fire-Proof Building.

The Nantucket Historical Society, which for a long time has had under consideration the erection of a fire-proof building for the better protection of its valuable collection of antiques, has taken formal steps towards providing such a structure, and has secured the services of George W. Watson, architect, of Boston, who has prepared preliminary sketches, which were considered by the building committee Tuesday evening, and Mr. Watson was authorized to make further sketches, including some desired alterations from his first drawings. The building will be located at the rear of the present structure of the society (the Friends' meeting-house on Fair street). This latter building will be moved out fifteen feet towards the street, and the new structure built against it. The latter will be of concrete construction, with either a steel beam and concrete roof, or a roof of mill construction type. It will be two stories, with basement, the second floor to comprise a broad gallery with open well to the first floor, and a vestibule and office jutting out along the north side of the present building.

David W. Gibbs will begin next week the moving of the present building, and Benjamin S. Adams will do the excavating for the new structure.

The response to an appeal for contributions to the building fund has been most liberal, and put the society in position to go immediately ahead with the work.

Our cut shows the ground plot, and will give an idea of the size of the proposed new edifice, the necessity for which has long been felt. When plans are fully matured, we will present them more in detail.

## Another Generous Donation.

Miss Caroline L. W. French, of Boston, who, it will be remembered, most generously gave to the Nantucket Historical Association, in 1895, the amount of the mortgage on the property (\$750) and later gave \$135 to complete the sum required to buy the old mill, has recently offered further proof of her interest in that society by a gift of \$500 for the fireproof building fund. The interest of this sum, which will be designated the French fund, is to be used for the purchase of articles for the museum, until such time as the principal shall be required for its prescribed purpose. May other generous friends hasten the day! It is gratifying that this urgent need of the association should be recognized, and most encouraging to receive such substantial aid. Much valuable historical material will find its way back to Nantucket whenever a fireproof building shall stand ready to receive and protect it. The building fund, with the addition of the French fund, now amounts to \$800.00, but \$10,000 will be required.

Jan. 1911

Sept. 22, 1899



### A Valuable Gift.

The Nantucket Historical Association has recently become the possessor of a valuable and interesting article, the history of which is linked with that of two families, well known in the past history of Nantucket. This consists of a large silver spoon, engraved with the name of John Hadwen Hosier, and is donated by C. Hadwen Crowley of this town. The story of it is as follows:

About the year 1750 two close personal friends, named Hosier and Hadwen, left Law Wrey, New Hawkshead, County of Lancashire, England, and came to America together, settling in Newport, R. I. Here, a few years later, a son was born to the one named Hosier, and named for the friend who came over with them, John Hadwen. In honor of the name, the child was presented with the silver spoon, engraved John Hadwen Hosier. This remained in the Hosier family until it became the possession by inheritance of the late William Hosier of this town, a great-grandson of the first owner. Shortly before his death he gave the spoon to Mr. Crowley, the great-great-grandson of the first John Hadwen. So, after nearly one hundred and fifty years, it once more returned to a descendant of the original giver, and now, through the generosity of Mr. Crowley, is secured forever to Nantucket's historical museum.

### Old Almanacs.

Editor of The Inquirer and Mirror:

You have recently published two items regarding old almanacs, mentioning that of Miss Durban, dated 1837, and those of Mrs. Crocker, dated 1792, 1806, etc. I wish to call your attention to the fact that our own Historical Association has a rare collection of these relics of by-gone times, which antedate those you speak of by more than forty years.

We have copies of Nathaniel Ames' Almanac from 1749 to 1791, complete, and moreover have duplicate copies of these from 1759 up, which latter we would be glad to sell or exchange for others we may not have. We have also a very nearly complete set of the Old Farmer's Almanac from 1800 to the present time.

Besides these files covering more than a century and a half, we have many copies of other curious old almanacs, which are rare and well worth examination.

S. E. Brock,

Curator N. H. A.  
Nantucket, Aug. 26th, 1907.

### A Generous Gift to the N. H. A.

George H. Paddock of Providence, R. I., a former resident of Nantucket, and William M. Caldwell, M.D., also of Providence, have presented to the Nantucket Historical Association, "The United States Official History of the Rebellion—'61 to '65." This is a work of about 126 or 128 volumes.

### More Interesting Documents.

Since the publication last week of an account of an ancient passport on parchment issued by Captain Hezekiah Barnard, as master of the ship Alliance, and signed by John Adams as president, and Timothy Pickering as Secretary of state, bearing the date July 27, 1797 and countersigned by Stephen Hussey, collector of the district of Nantucket, there has been brought to light the original commission of the district of Nantucket, signed by George Washington, president, and bearing the date of 1791.

And still another ancient document, being a marriage certificate of David Coffin with Abigail Folger, according to the rites of the Society of Friends, bearing date of "the twenty-ninth day of the eighth month called August, in the year according to the Christian account one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven." This certificate was written by Benjamin Coffin, clerk of the meeting, the penmanship being most elegant, and witnessed by 14 men and 14 women, among the male witnesses appearing the name of Elihu Coleman, an approved minister of the Society of Friends, and who was the author of the first public printed pamphlet directed against the system of chattel slavery in America. Among the female witnesses appears the name of Love Rotch.—N. B. Standard.

### Historical Society Presented Copy of Washington Document.

At the meeting of the Historical Association Wednesday afternoon, the Society was presented with a photostat copy of an interesting document coming down from the time of George Washington. It came to the Association as a gift from Mrs. Dionis Coffin (Warner) Santee and Miss Helen Cartwright McCleary, jointly, a great-great-granddaughter and great-great-granddaughter, respectively, of Capt. Henry Barnard, of Nantucket.

Rev. Phoebe Ann Hanaford's mother, Phoebe Ann Barnard, was the daughter of Capt. Henry Barnard of Nantucket, master and part-owner of vessels which sailed from New England ports to England, Ireland and Holland. Among her possessions, Mrs. Hanaford treasured a "Protection Paper" or "Clearance Paper", dated 1796, written in three languages, English, French and Dutch, signed by George Washington and by Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State, giving Capt. Barnard permission to take his ship "Lucinda", with a cargo of tobacco, lumber and whalebone, from Norfolk to Cork. By the permission of Mrs. Hanaford's granddaughter, Mrs. Dionis Coffin (Warner) Santee of Rochester, N. Y., photostat copies have been made of the original document, and it is one of these copies that has come to the Historical Association.

### After Thirty-Five Years.

It was thirty-five years ago this week that the corner-stone for the fire-proof building on Fair street was laid by the Nantucket Historical Association. For ten years the society had been occupying the Friends' meeting-house for its museum and during the passing years since it was organized in 1894 enough encouragement had been received, financial and otherwise, to warrant the association branching out and extending its efforts to preserve everything possible pertaining to the history and traditions of Nantucket.

During the thirty-five years that have passed by since the corner-stone was laid in 1904, all of the men and women who at that time were actively at work as officials of the association have been called to their reward. At this time, on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the laying of the corner-stone, and the forty-fifth anniversary of the organization of the society, it may be interesting to recall those who were largely instrumental in the movement. The officers who were on the job in 1904 were the following:

President—Alexander Starbuck.  
Vice Presidents—Henry S. Wyer, Sarah C. Raymond, Judith Fish, Benjamin Sharp, William F. Macy, and Moses Joy, Jr.  
Secretary—Elizabeth C. Bennett.  
Treasurer—Charles C. Crosby.  
Curator—Susan E. Brock.

The above have all passed away, and so have all those who served on the Council at that time.

We doubt if there was anyone, other than the writer, who was present at the annual meeting this week, who witnessed the laying of the corner-stone in 1904. As we recall it, that was a very interesting occasion. The corner-stone itself is in the southeast corner of the vestibule of the fire-proof building, adjoining the foundation of the old meeting house, but there is nothing on the outside to indicate that it is the corner-stone.

Within it is a copper box which contains copies of all of the proceedings of the Historical Association for the ten years previous, copies of *The Inquirer and Mirror*, and numerous other papers and articles of public interest. The box was sealed by the late Alexander Starbuck, who remarked, as he spread the cement: "It will be many years hence before this copper box will again be seen by human eyes."

The Rev. Edward Day asked the blessing and the Rev. F. W. Manning gave the benediction. A large group of Nantucketers and summer visitors watched the ceremony, but, as we stated above, we doubt if there was any other person at the annual meeting this week who was a witness of the 1904 event.

As we recall it, in the evening the society listened to an address by Lieut.-Governor Curtis Guild, and then went to the Ocean House, where a reception was held. The day's observance concluded with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne," with the late Miss Susan E. Brock at the piano.

### Sends Greeting.

The historical society of old Newbury (which place is so closely identified with Nantucket's early history) has sent the following pleasant letter to the local society, through its secretary:

NEWBURYPORT, March 9, 1895.

My dear Miss Starbuck:—Your enclosure of papers relating to the Historical Society of Nantucket was duly received and examined with much interest, none the less so because, in a way, the settlement of Nantucket was the child or offshoot of the older settlements of Newbury and Salisbury, while Tristram Coffin, whose name stands at the head of the purchasers of the island, was a man of note and position in Newbury, where his venerable, weather-worn mansion still stands, shadowed by its noble elm trees. I noted, too, in reading over the list of members, the frequent recurrence of names still common in Salisbury and Newbury—Coffin, Barnard, Hussey, Pike, Greenleaf, and others. I wish I had known of your society a little sooner, together with the Danvers Historical Society, that I might have cited it in my letter to the "Transcript" editor. However, in behalf of the historical society I represent, I extend its hearty greeting and salutation, with best wishes for your increase and prosperity.

Just at present I cannot return the compliment of sending the manual of the Newbury Historical Society. The organization was formed in 1877, but its by-laws and articles have been altered and amended several times since, so that now it is proposed to have a thorough revision of the whole and then publish for distribution.

We have quarterly meetings, at which papers on historical topics, usually connected with the history of the town, are read, and the summer meeting takes the form of a trip to some historic spot in this or one of the adjoining townships. We have a good-sized and valuable collection of portraits, both oil and crayon, prints and photographs, framed documents of various descriptions, old-time newspapers, manuscripts, historical relics of different sorts, all connected with the history of the town and its inhabitants. Our library of books and pamphlets is constantly increasing, as is our collection of antiques. The great disadvantage we labor under is the want of safe and suitable room in which to display our possessions and hold our meetings. We are at present bestowed in one of the lower rooms of the Public Library building, but the space is cramped and the light not very good, and we live in hopes of more commodious quarters some time.

I would like to enquire the full significance of the seal of your society. The harpoon and arrow I can readily see the point of, and I know what the date stands for; but what is the meaning of the thirty medals, and the two bell-crowned hats?

The treasurer of our society remarked with a smile, as he examined the escutcheon, he wondered if they were "grandfather's" hats.

With all good wishes for the well being of the Nantucket Historical Association,

Yours very truly,  
EMILY A. GETCHELL.

235 High Street.

March 16, 1895

For The Inquirer and Mirror.

Mr. Editor:

Will you kindly give space in your valuable paper to the following:

The Nantucket Atheneum is the recipient of a new Pierce darting whaling gun, kindly donated by the inventor, Capt. Eben Pierce of New Bedford; also a new harpoon, which is a part of this modern and valuable apparatus, and which was presented by Frederick Macy, Esq., of New Bedford, who kindly interested himself in the matter. In the past the Museum was fairly supplied with ancient appliances used in capturing whales, but the missing link is now supplied, and visitors from afar, unacquainted with the process of capturing the leviathan, can now have the whole matter more properly explained to them. This valuable gift connects the past with the present. The proprietors and visitors to the Atheneum will not fail to be interested in looking at the improvement in this mode of warfare.

H. P. CLAPP.

July 29, 1939

June 20, 1895

Oct. 12, 1907



## "Nantucket Gleanings."

By Harriet Deacon, Class of 1922,  
Nantucket High School.

The aim of the Historical Society has always been to keep safe for our own and future generations whatever is representative of our island. In this it has been untiring. The result is that the crowded building on Fair street holds implements of the early whaling days and of the spinning period, and even houses the historic fire-engine "Cataract," which is now eighty years old. A visit to this island treasure-house is like living the old days over. With its usual foresight, the Society has even preserved in the "Scrap Basket," to the delight of all, such tales as "Ma'am Hackett's Garden" and "Mr. W. Comes Prepared."

We students, coming as we do from all quarters of the town, hear many tales which may never yet have appeared in print. They are surely new to most of us. It has been our aim, both last year and this, as younger islanders who are proud of our history, to aid, if we may, by preserving some more of these old stories.

Somebody reports that a few years ago P. T. Barnum, the famous circus man, visited our island. After spending a beautiful spring afternoon driving about the flowered commons, he directed his driver toward what is now Cherry Grove Farm, Mr. S., the owner, drove out of his gate ahead of the famous man. He recognized Mr. Barnum, but jogged on, in independent island fashion, leaving the rear team in a choking cloud of dust. Reaching Monument Square at last, Mr. S. turned out a little, saying with an air of complete satisfaction, "Now, Mr. Barnum, you may go by." Then each went on his way.

We hear from another source that the meat in Nantucket used to be auctioned off on the Square. Every piece bore a stick, which specified its number and weight. One day, the auctioneer stood up before the crowd and cried, throwing out his hands, "Come! Come! Everybody bid high, today! My son has a sharp corner to turn! Just look at all this meat! Look! Look at the array of it, all of you! Mutton in parvo: Much meat for little money."

Another tale is about Uncle Hezekiah and his friend Eben. Uncle "Hez" was known to be in sympathy with the spiritualists. Indeed, he was called one himself by some folks. He liked to talk things over with Eben pretty well, and Eben himself was far from being tongue-tied.

One day, in a serious mood, Uncle "Hez" called Eben to him and said, "Eben, after I am gone, if you're still here, I wish you would make it your practice to come over to the south grave-yard and talk to me once a year. I shall be very lonely, and shall want to hear about what is going on."

Eben listened reflectively, and promised faithfully. Soon after, Uncle Hezekiah died and was buried in the old South cemetery. A tall marble tombstone was erected, for he had been a well-to-do man, though rather "close."

True to his promise, Eben visited his friend in the family lot once a year, to tell the news.

On one of these errands of mercy, he was overheard to say, "Well, Hezekiah, here I am, just as I promised. There ain't much goin' on around this island. I can't think of any news to tell you except that cucumbers are now fifteen cents apiece. Yes, fifteen cents apiece! I really believe, Hezekiah, that you'd be better off to stay right where you are."

One of the several Nantucket girls named Love was wooed and won by a gentleman named Captain Pepper. Her small sister Azula was quite excited over it. She went to school the next morning and boasted to her small friends, "My sister Love's got a man. His name is Captain Ginger, and they're goin' to be married!"

Another tale of the "Square" is this: Uncle Charles was looking over his son's property up on Main street. The land was covered with ragweed. "Well," he remarked, "if ragweed seed sells at any price at all on the Square this year, my son Albert will make a fortune!"

A certain house in town was known to be kept by a lady "as neat as wax." In fact, she spent most of her time dusting and polishing, to make her rooms look "spick and span." Her neighbors often wondered why she was always peering under her furniture.

One day, one of them inquired, "Why is it, Mary, that you are always gazing on the floor, and under the chairs and tables?"

"That's easy enough to answer," replied the extremely neat housewife. "I am just looking for 'stray kittens' of dust."

Another custom of hers was to keep the very shiny door-knob and knocker always covered with cloth over Saturday night in order to have them bright on Sunday. The North Shore boys used to tease her by removing the rags over Saturday night. But she tied them up again, and soon the boys, growing tired of this frolic, found some new mischievous enterprise for their nightly "raids."

The quick wit of the early Nantucketers is well known. Capt. B., a jolly old Nantucket seafarer, used to drive the 'Sconset mail and passenger team, called "Swift-Sure." One day, while passing "Our Island Home," which bore no sign then, a passenger in Capt. B.'s "Swift-Sure" asked, "What is this large building on the left, Captain?"

"Oh, that's the home of the Italian opera," he replied.

A person "on-from-off" wondered what the conspicuous building was on Brant Point. This was the hotel "Nantucket," which was noticeable as the boat rounded the Point. "What is this place, Captain?" inquired the stranger.

"Why, that's a brewery," he answered.

An old 'Sconset resident, a little, bent-over woman, was entertaining a

caller one day. We may call her Auntie Swain. Everyone in the small village of Siasconset liked to visit Auntie, for she was noted for her witty, old-fashioned remarks, and so original, too. On this day, Cousin Hannah, a relative, had come "stepping-in" to have a "gam." Auntie said many things to relatives that she would hardly think of mentioning to "outsiders." Sitting by the window, peering out at the passers by, nothing escaped her scrutinizing gaze.

"Well," she remarked, "I wonder where that male-bein' is rantum-scootin'! He's walkin' mighty fast. Yes, mighty fast. Looks sort o' suspicious. And my sakes alive, Hannah, just come here! If there isn't Linda Bean, goin' down town to have her 'likeness taken!'"

Another resident of this quaint little village, Mrs. S., sold pies. In fact, she was considered one of the best pastry-makers for miles around. No advertising was needed, for they even sold ahead. One morning, towards dinner-time, one of the airy summer visitors tapped lightly on her outside kitchen door.

"Come in!" called out Mrs. S. "Well, what's wanted? A pie, I s'pose."

"How did you surmise?" asked the eager customer. "I should like a lemon pie." Then, looking toward the pantry, to which Mrs. S. was turning, the visitor spied two fluffy lemon pies there. "I'll take both, if you don't mind," she added.

"Oh, no, no!" answered Mrs. S. immediately. "I couldn't possibly sell you both, for somebody else might want one!"

Among the old amusements of the island young folk were candy frolics, squantums, or shore clam-bakes, and beach-plumming. Coskata and Great Point were said to be purple with beach plums, once upon a time. All the young folk about Podpis would get an ox-team and go for the day. One fall somebody got up a party; but, by some error, a young lady named Patience was forgotten. Her heart was broken, but mother came to the rescue.

"Now, Patience," she said, "you get ready quickly. We'll have old Charley harnessed, and you shall go. You will find them eatin' dinner over by Great Point Light."

Patience was soon on her way, with her lunch and plum pails in the stout box-wagon. The ride through the beach sand was hard pulling. At length, however, she passed Coskata, and at last the lighthouse, on the end of the point, was in view. The gay, laughing, young people were there, with hands pink with plums.

The omitted lady got out of the wagon, a little confused. "I was drivin' by," she said, "so I thought I'd just drop in."

A familiar old character was Mr. G. He was once offered a fine position, and was asked what college he had attended.

"Brown's sail-loft," was the quick answer.

One of the Polpis school-teachers, very new and very young, was once visited by the school committee. After dismissal, they asked her what she needed most.

one

The blushing new teacher, a little confused, answered, modestly, "I should like very much to have a mouse-trap and a piece of cheese."

A Nantucket girl was late to school one day. Hastening in, she left the door open.

The teacher, feeling the draft, asked, sarcastically, "Abisha, don't they have any doors at your house?"

"Yes," replied Abisha, "nine in the kitchen, sir."

A certain weaver, who had his shop on Gardner street, was believed to be able to read thoughts, especially children's. After school, and on their way home, the children would always "step in" for a visit with Uncle. Everybody always asked, "Uncle, did I fail in school today?"

"No, you didn't, Tom, but I am certain that this girl, Nabby, did."

Strange to tell, Uncle never guessed wrong. The amazed children were sure that Uncle was a wizard.

Not all of the older islanders were perfect when they were young. They were human, just as we are. Ann, who attended the staid and proper Coffin School, had a painful toothache. It ached very badly, so she gained permission to slip home for some oil of clove. Looking out between the tall white pillars of the porch, she noticed young John Starbuck come dashing by in his new sleigh, behind one of those famous, swift Starbuck horses.

"Come on, Ann," he called out eagerly. "Have a ride."

Ann could not resist this urgent invitation. Quickly seizing the first hat and coat on the hooks, she put them on and hastened out.

"Tell me when ten minutes are up, John, for I must return at that time."

What a swift, gay ride they did have, way over Orange street and back by the Quaker meeting-house on Fair! Then the gallant youth lifted Ann down and bade her good-bye. She thanked him for the ride, sped up between the tall pillars and through the door, and sat down in her seat, with extremely rosy cheeks. That toothache, wonderful to relate, had vanished!

At dinner that noon, Father said, "Ann, I did not realize that you owned a hat bearing a red feather."

"Why, father, I haven't," she began.

"Of course Ann hasn't," Mother added, not knowing that she was shielding her daughter.

"Oh," said her father, "I just thought I caught a glimpse of her, Thankful, about eleven o'clock, rounding Orange street corner like lightning, with young John Starbuck."

"Nonsense," said Mother, again unconsciously helping Ann out. "She has been at school all the forenoon. Besides, her winter bonnet is blue. Are your eyes troubling you, Obed?"

Ann's face was very red, but she kept Quaker silence. Luckily for her, she was not obliged to say anything. Years after, she told her mother, who said, "Why, Ann!" This is a true story, with different names.

This Quaker story is told as it might have happened. The main facts are all true.

over



Aunt Deborah Cartwright, a spinster and Quaker, used to live alone at the foot of Orange Street, where the railroad crossed. Her nephew, Simeon, who had just brought her some new turnips from his mother, stood in rather deep thought.

"Aunt Deb," he said, after gazing admiringly about the large kitchen, "wouldn't this be a jolly place for a dance? That is, if we danced," he added, wistfully.

"Thee would do well to remember that 'if,' was the severe reply. 'Fifth Day meetin' comes in two days. Tell thy mother that I thank her for the gift, and that I will come before sunset, with my knittin', and spend the night. As for thee, 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.'"

Just at nightfall, arrived Aunt Deborah at Sister Ann's house on Pearl street. After she had been duly welcomed, and was settled in the straight-backed chair by the fireplace, she took out her knitting and her silver-rimmed spectacles, and hung the prim black bag, containing the long iron key to the kitchen door, on the back of the chair.

"Dost see? It is her handkerchief, by the chair!" exclaimed quick-witted Hannah to Simeon, her brother, who stood in the shadow, watching. "Haste to get thy sweet Mary, and tell Samuel and Micajah that all is well for our dance," she went on. Then, stepping quickly forward, she said, modestly, "Aunt Deborah, thee hast dropped thy handkerchief. I will pick it up and put it safely into thy bag." At the same time, she slipped the big key out. Then she sped away to the back door-step, where several eager pairs were waiting, and Samuel, with his fiddle, ready for crafty Hannah.

An hour or so they spent joyfully, dancing in Aunt Deb's wonderful large kitchen. There was nothing slow about Samuel's fiddling or those nimble Quaker feet, for they all kept moving every minute. Then, someone spied the clock on the kitchen shelf. It was half-past eight, and time to be starting, in order to reach home before the curfew, after which young folks, especially Friends, were expected to be safe at home. Each couple hastened away; and after arranging to meet her brother by the back door, Hannah and her Samuel locked Aunt Deb's door, secured the big key, and started for home in his smart new box-wagon. Orange street was far too short for the happy pair. How they had enjoyed that dance! Presently they were there, and Simeon was waiting.

"But how wilt thee return the key?" asked brother Simeon, a little anxiously.

"Trust me," replied Hannah. "Thy arm is stronger, Simeon, but thy thought is slower."

So saying, she stepped demurely into the room and presented her aunt with two large white peppermints to take home in the morning.

"Shall I wrap them and put them into thy bag, on the chair? Yes, I will put in your knitting, too," for the old Unitarian clock was striking nine, and it was bed time.

Another apparently new tale of the "purple isle" was told lately by one of the members of the Laymen's League, formed here during the last winter. Some of the serious, gray

clad Quakers were known to be "near," as well as thrifty, but they had honest intentions. A sober farmer of these folk owned a peat-bog. Needing help, he hired a town lad to come out and tread.

After working hard during the forenoon, the boy thought, "How hungry I am for that good dinner!"

As he was thinking, the distant town clock tolled out the noon hour; and, very soon after, the call came for dinner. The lad's employer met him by the steps.

"Thet has worked well, my boy," said the Quaker, reaching to him a dish filled with tomatoes. "Fall to, and help yourself."

"Alas!" thought the youngster. "I hate tomatoes and cannot get these down." So he slipped shyly away by himself. After a slight rest, he went back to treading. The afternoon seemed so long and weary; but he thought of the silver that was in prospect. Then for a good hot supper at home! So he plodded on.

At nightfall nothing was said about pay. The lad dragged himself back to town and had supper. After he had finished his farm chores, who should appear but the honest old Quaker.

"Here are your wages, my lad," he said, and passed out to him a pailful of—tomatoes!

This Quaker story many will remember: As the result of a good harvest, the cellar of a Nantucket Quaker was filled with big yellow pumpkins. Late one night, he heard a noise below.

"My pumpkins!" he thought; so he went out the front door, and crept stealthily around the house to investigate. There stood a shadowy wagon. The big cellar window was open, and a dusky figure was taking dark objects from somebody below. The Quaker was in his stockings, but the outside thief saw him, and shot off. The quick-witted owner stepped up quietly and took the runaway's place.

As he took up each heavy, round pumpkin, he remarked, "Only a few more, brother. We'll soon have a good load." Finally the last had been placed in the wagon. Then, reaching down, he gave his hand to the man below. Up the culprit bounced, face to face with the owner. It was not too dark to feel who it was. If the ground could only have opened up and swallowed him at that moment! But it didn't.

The Quaker said, "Now thee has passed them all out, thee will do well to get into the cellar again and I will pass them back to thee." This was done. The wagon was unloaded, and the Quaker went back to bed.

It is delightful to us to hear the older folk tell these quaint tales. It may seem to some that there are no more stories characteristic of Nantucket which have not been in print already. Let them get somebody who remembers the old days, started. We younger folk have been learning how to gather material of those who know; and it is for our generation to gather these stories now, write them down, and keep them in the annals of our Historical Society. It makes the past real again. We often wonder whether we shall have such worthwhile tales of our times to

our children and grandchildren. We shall have these of the past. Moreover, the old Nantucket will surely never die out entirely, if we, the young descendants, do our part in preserving the quaintness, the simplicity, and the uprightness of this our dear old town.

AUGUST 26, 1922

### A Few More Recollections.

Editor of The Inquirer and Mirror:

The season of reminiscences with which The Inquirer and Mirror has been brightening the lives of both present and former residents of the island, both natives and "off-islanders," will doubtless soon give way to the season of summer boarders. Hence one must hasten, if he is to prolong the former season a bit.

Other correspondents have mentioned old Mr. Olin's store on Water street, somewhere near the corner of Old North wharf, where John A. Hussey's tin-shop stood on the corner at one time. I recall his son, Henry P. Olin, who kept a boot and shoe store at the corner of Main and Orange streets. His son, George Olin, was a playmate of mine, and later was in the electrical business in Fall River, but has now left that city, I think. He had an older brother Fred. Henry lived the latter part of his life in Boston.

Another schoolmate was Ed Bronson, whom we called "Deacon," since his father was pastor for a time at the Baptist church. He lived on Fair street, and our back yards joined.

One of the wrecks of the seventies I recall vividly. It was that of the new three-masted schooner, W. F. Marshall, which came ashore on the south side of the island near the "Mioxes." Being "light," and striking an opening between shoals, she came broadside up on the beach, and all the men had to do was to climb over the side onto the shore. It was a favorite drive for islanders and visitors, that summer, to go across the commons and see the big schooner lying helpless at the surf's edge, and to watch Mr. Bardain, of East Boston, and his gang of wreckers, trying to float her by pumping her out and patching her up. As I recollect, the effort was a failure.

A short distance to the eastward, at about the same time, an Italian bark, the Papa Luigi C., came ashore, landing on a shoal about a quarter of a mile from the beach. The boys used to swim out to her. About that time I had charge of "Fannie," the horse of T. H. Soule, Jr., who lived in the house south of father's on Orange street, and I had several opportunities of going to see the wrecks.

One of the pleasant recollections of "Coffin School days" is the literary society Mr. Fox formed one winter, which used to meet up in the library, on certain evenings. Among those taking part were Isaac H. Folger, Miss Minnie Smith and others. It has been a pleasure to me to receive letters appreciative of previous reminiscences from Minor Davis, Mrs. Susie B. Anthony and Mrs. Florence Easton Conable. I wish they would send to The Inquirer and Mirror articles reminiscencial.

I was a little amused at the wonderful way 15 folks petitioned for a special town meeting on April 21, in order to revise recent appropriations downward, then failed to appear, and revision upward followed. It really must be that Nantucket, always rich in ozone and ocean, moorlands and mosses, is also growing wealthy in dollars and cents. Well, if good roads cause more dollars to roll in on them, by all means have more roads and more dollars.

I am much pleased to read occasional articles from my former Sunday School superintendent, Mrs. Mary F. Coffin, now moved from Atlantic to Pacific. I well recall her mother, Mrs. Brown, who I think lived to be a nonogenarian, as I trust her daughter may.

By the way, one of my kind correspondents, in referring to my "Legend of the Old Mill," says "The best part of it is, it's true," referring, of course, to the fact of the cannon-ball striking the old mill.

Can anyone inform us, through your columns, where the historic statement may be found? I recalled the rumor and then spun the yarn.

W. D. Woodward.

May 17, 1913



### Nantucket Heirlooms Return To The Island.

The Nantucket Historical Association numbers among its extensive collection numerous historic relics and heirlooms which have been many years "off-island." In recent years several of these island family heirlooms have been returned to Nantucket by some descendant, into whose possession it had passed. Among these gifts, for example, was the rosewood chronometer case presented Captain James Paterson by the King of Prussia; the Captain Mayhew Folger logbook, and numerous other island-famous relics.

This week the Nantucket Historical Association records two gifts, which, while not as well-known as the items listed as examples of island history, are none-the-less peculiarly Nantucket heirlooms.

The first of these gifts comes from Miss Maude Backus, of 151 Elgin street, Newton Center, Mass. It consists of two silver knives and a silver pitcher which were presented her grandfather, Captain Lot Phinney, a century ago. The knives, of excellent make, are inscribed:

"To Captain Lot Finney, from his friend Wm. E. Bartlett, Jr., December 17, 1848."

The second item—a very beautiful piece of silver—is inscribed thus:

"Presented to Capt. Lot Phinney of the steamer *Massachusetts* by a party of Ladies and Gentlemen who on the Fourth of July and the 2d and 5th of August, 1844, passed many pleasant hours on board that noble steamer, confident in the skill and delighted with the courtesy and kindness of her Commander."

Captain Lot Phinney took over the command of the *Massachusetts* on that steamer's maiden voyage on July 4, 1842. She was 161 feet long and 24 feet beam, with a depth of 8 ft. 4 inches, and was considered the finest steamboat on the New England coast at the time.

Captain Phinney was an intrepid commander. During a terrific gale from the northwest on Nov. 27, 1842, the whaleship *Joseph Starbuck*, bound across the sound to Edgartown to complete fitting out for a voyage, was driven on Nantucket bar after unsuccessfully trying to weather the gale. Captain Phinney took the *Massachusetts* out around Brant Point to the scene of the wreck and rescued the thirty-five persons on board by his judicious handling of the steamer.

On another occasion, Capt. Phinney took his steamer out around the island to help pull to safety the ship *Louis Philippe* stranded off Tom Nevers head in 1847. The *Massachusetts* continued in these waters until 1855, when she went to another route. During the Civil War she was used around Fortres Monroe under the name of *John D. W. Pentz*. She ended her days under her original name and in Chesapeake Bay.

The silver pitcher was made in Boston by Lincoln and Reed, silversmiths, and was transported to Nantucket by Col. Hatch, who presented it to Capt. Phinney in behalf of the presentors.

The second heirloom to return to Nantucket is a Quaker marriage certificate—the gift of Andrew A. Butts, of South Dartmouth, Mass. It is in a frame and is about 22 inches square, in a fine state of preservation.

The certificate records the marriage of Henry Burdick and Lydia Easton, which took place at a monthly meeting of the Society of Friends, July 7, 1816. It reads:

"Now, these are to certify to all whom it may concern that . . . the said Henry Burdick and Lydia Easton, appeared at a publick assembly of the afforesaid people and others in their meeting house in Nantucket aforesaid and he the said Henry Burdick taking the said Lydia Easton by the hand, did openly declare as follows: 'Friends, I take this my friend Lydia Easton to be my wife promising thro divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful husband untill it shall please the Lord by death to separate us'."

The document is signed by forty-four Friends, including Isaac Austin, Tristram Folger, James Barker, Deborah Hussey, Dorcas Gardner, George Easton, Sarah M. Coffin, Smith Upton, Behiah Russell, Jonathan Swain, and other island family representatives, whose descendants are still living on Nantucket as well as being scattered over the world.

The Nantucket Historical Association is always pleased to accept such Nantucket family treasures, which it carefully places in its collection to be preserved for generations to come.

APRIL 15, 1944.

### Historical Society Gets \$1,000.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences receives the sum of \$3,000 under the will of William Watson, the scientist, who died recently at his home in Boston, and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and the Nantucket Historical Society are given \$1,000 each. The will was filed Wednesday at the Suffolk Registry of Probate.

Mary Farnum, a niece of the testator, receives his library and such books as she does not care to keep will go to the Nantucket Historical Society library.

Strictly scientific works and instruments, including drawings and photographs, go in trust to Augustus H. Fiske, to be divided among the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Mr. Watson's *Louis Philippe* china is given to his brothers-in-law, Charles H. and Andrew Fiske, to be held in trust for the Fiske family.

### Gives Family Heirlooms To Historical Association.

The Nantucket Historical Association came into possession of several valued pieces of typically Nantucket articles this week. Mrs. Julia Ellis, of Union street, now making her home in Boston with her daughter, Miss Mildred Oldrich, was the donor, and her gifts included a sea-chest, whalebone and scrimshaw, carried on board whaleships by her uncle Benjamin Fisher, old crockery, an earthenware jar, pewter spoons and old framed pictures which have been in her family for generations, and the Civil War papers of her grandfather, Samuel C. Crawford, one of the Nantucket men who served in the Army of the Potomac.

The Historical Association is eager to secure any similar articles so intimately connected with the island and its history. Last week an appeal was made for old furniture, so that in the event an island dwelling were given to the Association Nantucket furniture might be available. In her donations Mrs. Ellis included a fine old drop-leaf table.

It has been said on numerous occasions that Nantucketers of today are woefully unfamiliar with the work and aims of the Historical Association, as shown by the surprisingly small list of islanders in the Association's large membership. An invitation is extended to all residents to join the society and thus contribute to the preservation of Nantucket's greatest heritage—its remarkable history.

### Commander Byrd's North Pole Flag Comes to Nantucket.

Through the interest in his home town held by Capt. Harry Manter, port captain of the U. S. Shipping Board at New York, the Nantucket Historical Society has this week received a very valuable relic—something of international interest.

It is the American flag which was flown by the S. S. Chantier when she left Spitzbergen with Commander R. E. Byrd on board, to make his flight through the air to the North Pole. The flag has been autographed by both Commander Byrd and his mechanic, Floyd Bennett, the men very kindly writing their names on one of the white stripes of the flag, which of course adds to its historic interest, as these were the two men who first flew to the North Pole and return.

Captain Manter could have bestowed the flag elsewhere, of course, as it is a relic that would be greatly desired by any historical or geographical society anywhere, but his interests are always with Nantucket, and when he saw the chance to secure this famous flag for the local Historical Society he seized the opportunity and brought it with him when he came home for his annual visit.

The flag was handed to Miss Brock, the curator of the Historical Association, accompanied by a letter from Captain Manter telling its history, and calling attention to the autographs of Byrd and Bennett as vouchers for its authenticity.

JULY 31, 1926

### Historical Documents Located.

While browsing around in the workshop of Frank F. Sylvia's Antique Shop last week, John L. Hinckly, a summer resident of Nantucket, came upon a dust-covered box filled with old papers. Believing them to be of more than ordinary value historically, he informed a member of the Nantucket Historical Association, who investigated.

When it was learned that the documents and papers had to do with the old lighthouse bureau and custom house in Nantucket, Mr. Sylvia generously turned over the material to the Association. He stated that the papers had been offered to the Association a number of years ago, but that they were not accepted. In the interim, much of the material had been sold to a summer resident who in turn sold it to individuals in town. This consisted principally of shipping papers, crew lists and old steamboat licenses.

Through Mr. Sylvia's co-operation the remainder of the documents now come to their rightful resting places. They serve as an interesting connecting link with the old custom house and lighthouse district and offer many glimpses into the olden days.

### Nantucket Society Has "Smallest Dictionary", Too.

The Nantucket Historical Association has one of those "smallest dictionaries," too, which makes it evident that there must be a number of them in existence. The local society's midget book is apparently a duplicate of that in the possession of Mrs. Emily Olm, of Lawrence, for it is of the same dimensions—that is, slightly over an inch long, 5-8 of an inch wide and 1-4 of an inch thick—and it, too, reposes in a metal case, with a magnifying glass on its cover. The Historical Society's copy belonged to Fanny Kemble, the English actress, who died in 1893 at the age of 84 years.

At the shop of Mr. Charles H. Robinson can be seen a piece of tile work, some two hundred years old, which has been presented to the Nantucket Athenaeum, for the Museum, by Mr. Paul Mitchell, of Cambridgeport. It is four feet square, and is an exact model of a similar piece taken from the mines of Pompeii. The centre piece represents a dog fastened by a large chain, under which is the inscription, "Cave canem."



## Admiral Byrd's Antarctic Flag in Nantucket Museum.

In the summer of 1926 the Nantucket Historical Society was able to add to its collection of historic relics the flag which was flown by the U. S. S. Chantier which carried Rear-Admiral Richard E. Byrd and his party on their successful expedition to the North Pole. The flag flown by the Chantier was secured by Capt. Harry Manter, of Nantucket, marine superintendent of the United States Shipping Board at New York city, and it is a relic which Nantucket thoroughly appreciates.

Last summer, when he came to Nantucket for his vacation, Captain Manter brought another interesting relic—the flag flown by the "City of New York" which carried Admiral Byrd and his party on their expedition to the South Pole. The American ensign flown by the "City of New York" is now the property of the Nantucket Society, along with that flown by the Chantier, and both flags will be preserved in the fire-proof building which shelters so many valuable historic relics. Nantucket has thus come into possession of the two flags which Admiral Byrd flew when he went to the two Poles, a fact that is of more than passing interest.

To substantiate the authenticity of the South Pole ensign, Captain Manter has forwarded to Mrs. Adams, the curator, a letter explaining how he came into possession of the historic flag and with it a photostat copy of a letter addressed by Admiral Byrd to Captain Brennan, who was master of the Chantier, and also a photostat copy of a letter sent to Captain Manter by Admiral Byrd, the two vouching for the authenticity of the flag.

Captain Manter has very kindly sent us copies of these letters, in order that our readers may know how Nantucket was so fortunate as to come into possession of the two flags which flew over Byrd's expeditions to the North and South Poles. The letters appear herewith:

November 18, 1930.

Mrs. Nancy Adams, Curator,  
Nantucket Historical Association,  
Nantucket, Mass.

Dear Mrs. Adams:-

Attached hereto please find original letter as addressed to the undersigned from Admiral Richard E. Byrd, covering the authenticity of the American Ensign which I gave to you last August for the Nantucket Historical Association.

You will also please find photostat copy of a letter which was addressed to Captain M. J. Brennan, Port Captain of the American Republics Line, one of the Companies now operating one of our services. Captain Brennan was Master of the "Chantier", the vessel that transported Admiral Byrd on his expedition to the North Pole.

You will note from the photostat copy that has been addressed to Captain Brennan, the very friendly atmosphere that exists between Admiral Byrd and himself. This is most natural on account of both of the men in question being such affable fellows. You will also note from the information contained in the letter addressed to Captain Brennan the historic value that Admiral Byrd places on the American Ensign, which was flown by the "City of New York".

There was quite some maneuvering exercised by the writer in obtaining this ensign. I had, prior to the sailing of the "City of New York" been promised by a member of the expedition that upon the return of this vessel the flag in question would be given to me. We all realize the wonderful achievements that Admiral Byrd has

accomplished and the most excellent record that he has made in regard to his leadership of men, and taking all of this into consideration, together with the success of the expedition, the flag that the Flagship "City of New York" flew at her gaff, becomes nearly priceless.

Due consideration must also be taken into effect that more than one flag would be necessary on a voyage of this kind, hence that part of the letter which has been addressed to Captain Brennan and which states that there were two flags on the ship, one of which remains and the other that has now become the property of the Nantucket Historical Association.

From the trend of the letter which was addressed to Captain Brennan by Admiral Byrd, it will be necessary for me to give you a resumé of what transpired and why Admiral Byrd used this particular phraseology in his letter of September 25th to Captain Brennan.

Captain Brennan went aboard the vessel and made himself known as the Ex-Master of the S. S. "Chantier" which made the voyage to the North Pole and stated to the men who were in charge at the time, that he was there for the specific purpose of securing the flag that had been flown by the vessel while she was in the Antarctic. When same had been secured by him he then gave the men in charge of the ship to understand that it was in order for him to have possession, to which of course the men acquiesced.

When he advised Admiral Byrd he had the flag and wished him to give him a letter in regard to its authenticity, Admiral Byrd stated that he would under one condition, and that was that Captain Brennan give him a full and complete story of how he (Captain Brennan) gained possession of same. Then, being cornered, he gave the true facts of the matter, and Admiral Byrd then gave him a letter, stating he would forgive him for what he had done.

I trust you will place the letter of September 25th from Admiral Byrd to the undersigned, with the flag so that those interested may realize the historic value that is attached to same.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Yours very truly,

H. Manter,  
Marine Superintendent.

Byrd Antarctic Expedition.

Rear Admiral, R. E. Byrd, U. S. N.,  
Captain H. H. Railey, Inf., Res.,  
U. S. A., Personal Representative  
Dublin, New Hampshire,  
September 25, 1930.

Captain M. J. Brennan

Port Captain

American Republics Line

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Mike:

It is all right, old fellow, I'd forgive you anything. The flag, of course, has great historic value.

But since it's done, we will let it stay so. There were two flags, so I have changed the wording of the letter to Captain Manter a bit.

With best wishes always, I am,

Your old friend,

Dick Byrd.

Byrd Antarctic Expedition.

Rear Admiral, R. E. Byrd, U. S. N.,  
Captain H. H. Railey, Inf., Res.,  
U. S. A., Personal Representative  
Dublin, New Hampshire,  
September 25, 1930.

Captain H. Manter

Marine Superintendent

Merchant Fleet Corporation

45 Broadway New York City.

My dear Captain Manter:

This is to say that insofar as I know, this flag was one of the Ensigns flown by the "City of New York" while she was on the South Pole Expedition.

Sincerely yours,

R. E. Byrd.

For The Inquirer and Mirror.

NANTUCKET, Feb. 24th, 1897.

Mr. Editor:

Those of your readers who have observed the weather cock lately placed in position on the N. H. S. building, may be interested in knowing something of its history.

April 17th, 1822, Job Coleman sold to Messrs. John, Perez and William Jenkins part of Fish lot, share No. 10, on Wesco Hill, to be used as a site for the proposed Lancasterian school-house. This special plot of land was just back of the property on Orange street, now owned by Mr. Francis B. Keene. February 20, 1823, this lot, with the school-house erected thereon, fronting on Fair street, was conveyed to the trustees of the Nantucket Lancasterian School, and the above-mentioned weather-vane was placed on the helfry at that time. This school, by the way, was started under the auspices of the Methodist Society; the first teachers were Mr. Bassett for the boys, and for the girls upstairs, a Miss Meach, from "off-island." In 1826, the trustees sold the building to William Coffin, Esq., for the Coffin School, and it was used for that purpose for about twenty years, when the Coffin School was suspended until in 1852 the present brick building was erected on Winter street. About 1851 the old Lancasterian school-house was sold by the trustees of the Coffin School to Messrs. Charles G. and Henry Coffin, and was moved by them to their oil-works on Coffin street, and used as a bleach house in connection with their candle manufactory. Later it was sold to Messrs. Allen Smith and James Gibbs, who moved it to the head of the new North wharf, south side. It was finally used as a stable, and was destroyed by fire in 1896.

When the Coffins bought the Lancasterian building, "all but the bell," the weather-cock was given to William Jenkins, Esq., one of the original trustees of that school, and it was placed by him on the shop standing in his house-yard on Orange street. There it remained until this year, when Capt. James Wyer, the present owner of the Jenkins place, presented it to the Historical Association. So if long experience counts for anything in a place where there is so much weather, the indications given by this oldest inhabitant among birds, ought to be accepted without question.

M. E. S.

Feb. 27, 1897

Mr. Editor:

Can your readers help the N. H. A. to obtain any of the articles in the following list, suggested from time to time by visitors at the Historical Rooms?

Communications may be addressed to Miss S. E. Brock, Curator, Miss S. A. Starbuck, Cor. Sec'y, Miss M. E. Starbuck, Rec. Sec'y.

Files of local papers or single copies of early dates.

High School publications.

School Committees' Reports.

Town and Agricultural Reports.

List of contributors to sufferers by fire of '46.

Black and White Balls used as Mail Signals—black for arrival of regular mail—white for California mail.

Picture of the Tea Ships.

Coats of Arms of Nantucket Families.

Any of the late William C. Folger's writings.

Photographs or daguerreotypes of deceased Nantucket men and women, especially town and Government officers, soldiers and sailors of the war of 1812, of the Mexican War, and of the Civil War.

Copy of Northrup's "Seonset Cottage Life."

"Tristum and his Grandchild'en."

A pounding-barrel.

A baking pan.

Any data relating to early history of Nantucket.

## A Valuable Gift.

The Nantucket Historical Association is the recipient of a valuable gift from the widow and heirs of the late George Howland Folger, a native of Nantucket. Mr. Folger, it will be remembered, was deeply in love with his island home, and everything pertaining to her history was of special interest to him. He gathered an immense amount of historical data, anecdotes and genealogical notes during his life, which he compiled and wrote in full for manuscript volumes. These volumes, numbering six (including a valuable index) have become the property of the Historical Association, the officers of which organization met yesterday and took appropriate action in acknowledgment of the valuable donation. The five volumes comprise a total of 1299 pages of manuscript, 262 pages being full letter size; 182 pages octavo; and the balance royal octavo. The volumes are substantially bound. The above figures are exclusive of the index, which is bound in same style as the other books.

March 2, 1895

## Mineral Collection.

A mineral collection of popular and scientific interest, and having a cash value of several thousand dollars, was formally presented the Nantucket Atheneum, through its trustees, Monday evening. The gift is from Hon. William Mitchell Bunker, of San Francisco, who personally collected the specimens, and who thinks, should his example be followed by other sons and daughters of the island, that the institution should have a collection of practical as well as scientific and popular value that might be utilized by the advanced scholars of the town. These specimens, which comprise six cases, were shipped from San Francisco about the middle of last month on ship William H. Smith, for New York, and should arrive there some time in July. A full catalogue of the specimens accompanied Mr. Bunker's letter of presentation.

Apr. 15, 1899

## A Curiosity.

Among the effects of the late Phebe A. West is an article of great ingenuity, and which is not generally known to exist. It is a beautifully carved cherry-stone, of ordinary size, mounted on an ivory standard, and was one of two brought from foreign lands by Capt. Paul West, father of deceased. The stone is so cut that the top unscrews, revealing to the beholder minute silver spoons, perfect in every particular, and each no larger than the head of a very small pin. There are twelve dozen of these in the stone closely packed in the limited cell. To understand the excellence of the workmanship of them a magnifying glass is necessary, but it reveals perfection. The second stone, which has been lost, was the counterpart of the one above mentioned, except that it contained gold instead of silver spoons.

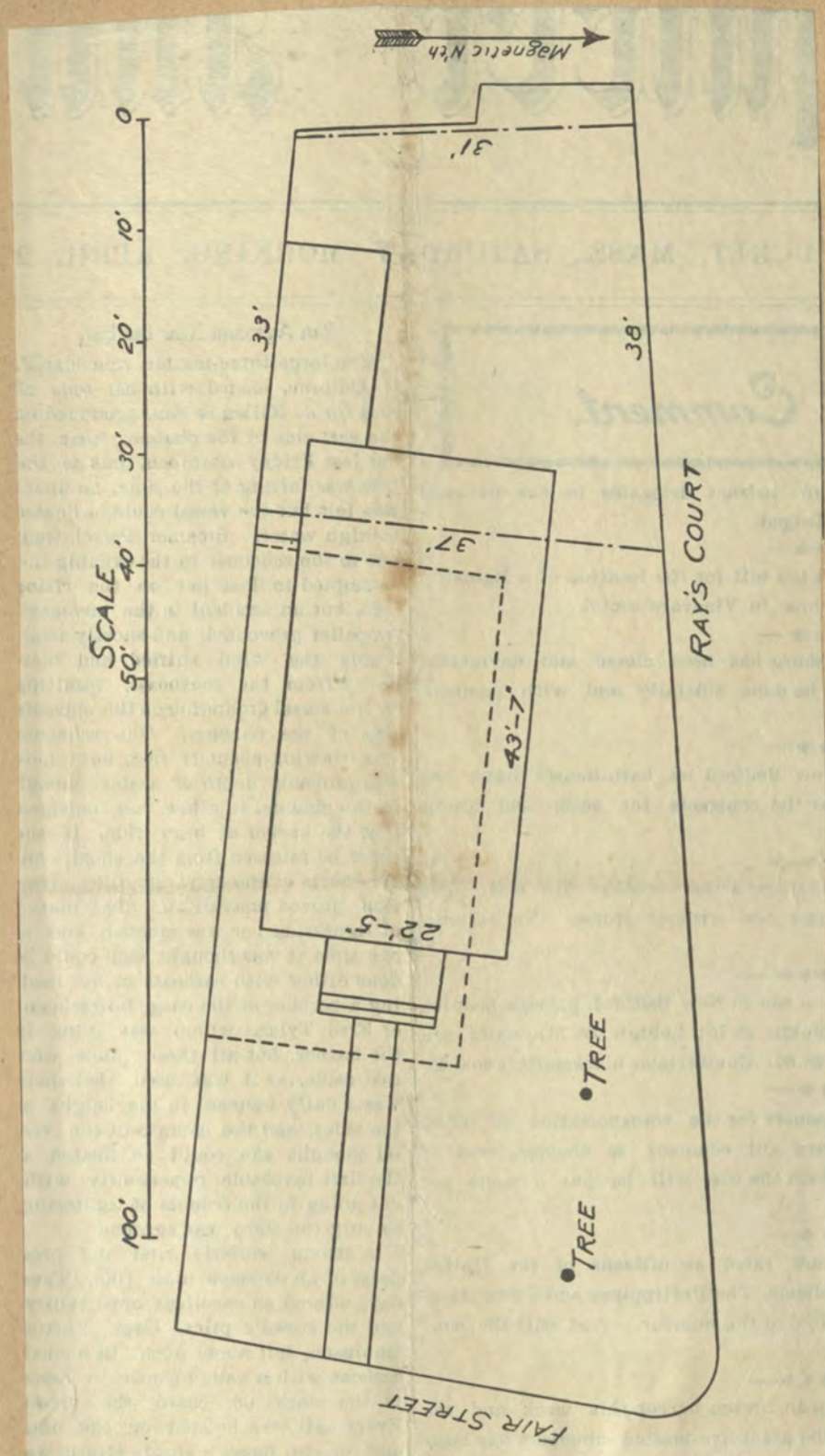
May 6, 1899

DECEMBER 6, 1930

Feb. 5, 1898



APRIL 23. 1904



#### Fire-Proof Building.

The Nantucket Historical Society, which for a long time has had under consideration the erection of a fire-proof building for the better protection of its valuable collection of antiques, has taken formal steps towards providing such a structure, and has secured the services of George W. Watson, architect, of Boston, who has prepared preliminary sketches, which were considered by the building committee Tuesday evening, and Mr. Watson was authorized to make further sketches, including some desired alterations from his first drawings. The building will be located at the rear of the present structure of the society (the Friends' meeting-house on Fair street). This latter building will be moved out fifteen feet towards the street, and the new structure built against it. The latter will be of concrete construction, either a steel beam and concrete roof, or a roof of mill construction type.

It will be two stories, with basement, the second floor to comprise a broad gallery with open well to the first floor, and a vestibule and office jutting out along the north side of the present building.

David W. Gibbs will begin next week the moving of the present building, and Benjamin S. Adams will do the excavating for the new structure.

The response to an appeal for contributions to the building fund has been most liberal, and put the society in position to go immediately ahead with the work.

Our cut shows the ground plot, and will give an idea of the size of the proposed new edifice, the necessity for which has long been felt. When plans are fully matured, we will present them more in detail.

#### Old 'Sconset Hand-Pumper Now in Historical Rooms.

On Tuesday morning, the "Siasconset No. 1," last of the hand-pumpers to be used by Nantucket firemen, was hauled from its quarters in the village and towed to town behind the central station's utility truck. Chief Cartwright, with the permission of the Selectmen, and after conferring with the 'Sconset Dept. officials, decided to transfer the old pumper to the custody of the Nantucket Historical Association.

The old hand-pumper now occupies a position alongside of "Cataract No. 6," the oldest of the island's fire-fighting equipment, in the building of the Historical Association on Fair street. The last time "Siasconset No. 1" was used was in October, 1924, when the Phillips' Block in 'Sconset was destroyed by fire. The pumper was first taken to the village in July, 1900.

March 31, 1951

#### New Shell Collection at the Fair Street Historical Rooms.

Valuable shells have been given to the Historical Association and a portion of the collection is now on view.

Benjamin A. Blundon, of Washington, in 1886 became the first Weather Observer of the U.S. Bureau in Nantucket. As his office was in the Pacific Club building he became a member and spent spare time in the club room talking with the retired whalemens. His particular interest was shells and the whalemens soon began bringing him specimens from the islands and continents of the world.

This collection was preserved by Mr. Blundon's family and, this year, his son, Preston Blundon of Hyattsville, Md., gave it to the Association.

Mrs. Edward Mott Davis, curator of the Beal-Maltbie Shell Museum, Rollins College, Winter Park, Fla., has arranged and classified the shells. The Beal-Maltbie collection is one of the most famous in the world. Dr. James Hartley Beal spent over fifty years in its collection. Mr. B. L. Maltbie presented the unique building in which the collection is housed. Mrs. Davis, responding to an invitation from her friend, Mrs. Samuel Snelling, visited the island for the purpose of assisting the Association in making the best and most interesting exhibit of these shells.

Among the shells are the Chambered Nautilus, made famous by Oliver Wendell Holmes; the Paper Nautilus, which is not the home of the animal but the beautiful lightweight basket to carry its eggs; the Pearly Oyster which makes the most beautiful pearls; the Helmet Shells from which the cameos are carved and many others each accompanied by its interesting story.

Aug. 25, 1951

#### Historical Association Lectures.

In the circular announcing the course of three lectures on maritime subjects for the benefit of the whaling museum fund, the hour at which the lectures are to begin was inadvertently omitted. The starting time will be 8:30 each evening. The many inquiries received as to the time give evidence of the interest in the subjects and the speakers and indicate a large attendance notwithstanding the thought sometimes expressed that "people don't want to go to lectures in the summer."

The past experience of the Historical Association has demonstrated the contrary. Its lectures have always been well attended, and its established reputation for offering the very best in its particular field augurs well for the success of the forthcoming course. "Pirates", "Our Navy" and "Clipper Ships" are three live subjects, and the lecturers engaged are quite as much alive as the subjects.

The first event, for instance, "Pirates and Piracy", to be given at the Yacht Club next Tuesday evening by the veteran journalist and author, Don C. Seitz, for many years managing editor of the New York World, is likely to prove quite as exciting and thrilling as any fictitious "talkie", besides having the merit of being a chronicle of actual happenings.

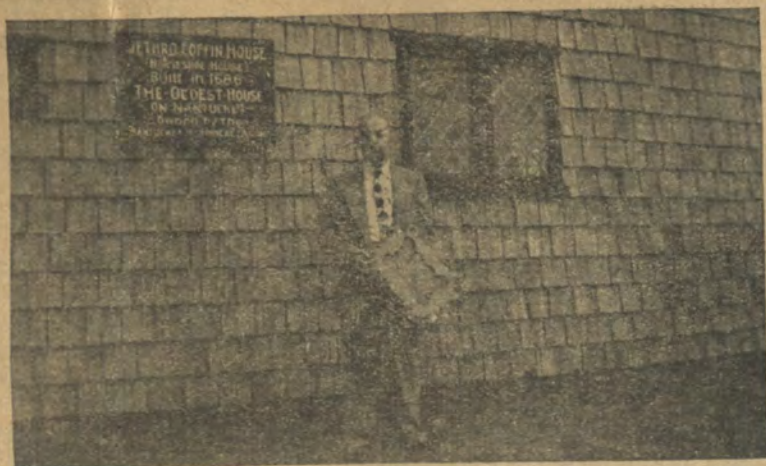
Pirates are a hobby with Don Seitz. Most of his lectures are on political themes, on which he is a master authority, but his real fun he gets out of his familiarity with the buccaneers of the Spanish Main, the Algerian corsairs, and the famous captains and crews of the "long, low, black suspicious-looking craft with raking masts", so long the terror of the honest merchantman on the high seas.

Col. E. M. House says: "Don Seitz knows his American history as few others do, and further he knows the essential and interesting facts". Of his political writing and speaking, the Forum says: "A quite irresistible combination of asperity and good humor". Still another authority: "His fund of information is huge and he knows how to dish it up in entertaining form". The Indianapolis News refers to his work as "scintillating". And so on. It would seem that even in summer such a speaker on such a subject should draw a record audience to the Yacht Club next Tuesday evening.

The succeeding lectures in the course are "The Story of the American Navy", by Rear-Admiral Reginald R. Belknap, U. S. N., retired, on August 10th, and "The Clipper Ship Era", by Dr. Charles E. Park, of Boston, on August 24th.

July 25, 1951





MR. FLOYD HOUGHTON AND THE SLATE HE PRESENTED TO THE HISTORICAL ASSOC.

### Old School Slate Returns to Nantucket.

A slate, which had been taken to school in Nantucket over a century ago, returned to the island recently after having been carried half way across the country. In 1835, Ebenezer Coffin, of Nantucket, first tucked the slate under his arm to trudge off to the Orange street school. When this Coffin family moved to Utica, N. Y., Ebenezer took the slate with him and used it in schools there.

A few weeks ago, Floyd Houghton, of Chicago, Ill., arrived on Nantucket with the slate, and presented it to the Nantucket Historical Association. Grandfather Coffin's daughter, Mrs. E. L. Houghton, had used the slate in Waterloo, Iowa, and after its last school days it had remained in the family. Recently, Mrs. Houghton sent the slate to her son in Chicago, expressing the hope that he would return it to Nantucket on his next trip to New England.

Sept. 29, 1957

### OBITUARY.

The death of Mrs. Eliza A. McCleave on Monday evening last at the age of 83 years removes one from our midst whose loss will be keenly felt by many who justly prized her friendship. While no extended obituary is called for to extol her virtues, her quiet life was replete with good works, unostentatiously performed, which will long keep her memory green. Many years ago she collected a cabinet of curios from all parts of the globe and this she was wont to exhibit for a small fee the proceeds of which were devoted to charity. She leaves one son residing in California.

### A Valuable Gift.

The widow and heirs of the late Geo. Howland Folger have donated to the Nantucket Historical Association an immense amount of historical data, anecdotes and genealogical notes which Mr. Folger compiled and wrote in full for manuscript volumes. These volumes, number six (including a valuable index) and comprise a total of 1299 pages of manuscript, 262 pages being full letter size; 182 pages octavo; and the balance royal octavo. The volumes are all substantially bound. The above figures are exclusive of the index, which is bound in same style as the other books.

Mar. 7, 1895

1858

### Custodian of Collections

At a meeting of the Council of the Nantucket Historical Association on Tuesday, it was voted to appoint Mrs. Walton H. Adams as Custodian of Collections.

Mrs. Adams, a Vice-President of the Association and co-chairman of the Fair Street Museum Committee, served as Curator of the Association over a period of fifteen years.

Her new position is an extension of the former office of Curator, with an enlarged scope, as she will now assume charge of the care and arrangement of the various collections. Through her years of experience, Mrs. Adams is fully qualified for this new and important position.

June 21, 1952

OLD PITCHER.—Mr. Wm. H. Jenks has in his possession the mate to the pitcher presented to the Boston Independent Fusiliers by his brother, Hon. S. H. Jenks. We saw this interesting relic on Wednesday. On one side is a figure attired in the uniform of the company at that time, 1792, on the other the coat of arms, &c.

Dr. Benjamin Sharpe, of the Academy of Sciences at Philadelphia, has written to ask the Historical society to allow two rare specimens of their collection, to go to Philadelphia, to be examined by some of the savants in the Academy there. These specimens are an Indian skull and a fossil, which was found at Madaket. It will be remembered that during the construction of Mr. David Nevins' cottage, on the Cliff, a skull was exhumed, which was believed to be that of an Indian, and has been so judged by many. Now a specialist has expressed a desire to examine it, and we shall be made certain of its origin, as far as expert knowledge can decide. It is certainly most creditable that the Historical association is thus able to furnish material for study to our leading American scientists. It is needless to say that the council unanimously voted to grant the request.

Oct. 15, 1896

### Historic Relics.

We noted recently the gift to the Historical Society by Mr. Frank L. Crosby of Lima, Peru, of some valued souvenirs of that ancient country. Mr. Crosby has followed up his former gift by another donation through his brother, Mr. C. C. Crosby, of a case containing 23 "huacos" or pieces of ancient pottery selected from different parts of the country so as to show the customs of each. It is supposed that this pottery which was interred with the dead bodies of Indians, contained supplies of food to carry them through their journey to the better land, and it is supposed to date back prior to the time of the Incas, hence it may safely be assumed to be over 1000 years old.

Apr. 20, 1897

### Another Donation.

Miss Caroline L. W. French of Boston who gave to the Nantucket Historical Association the mortgage on the property (\$750) and later gave \$185 to complete the sum required to buy the old mill, has recently made that society a gift of \$500 for the fireproof building fund. The interest of this sum, which will be designated the French fund, is to be used for the purchase of articles for the museum, until such time as the principal shall be required for the prescribed purpose. Much valuable historical material will find its way back to Nantucket whenever a fireproof building shall stand ready to receive and protect it. The building fund, with the addition of the French fund, now amounts to \$800.

Sept. 17, 1899

### Miss Folger's Will Proven.

The will of Miss Susan Wilson Folger, containing \$26,000 in public bequests, was proved before Judge Morton in the supreme court on Friday week, Horace W. Folger of Winthrop, a nephew, and Susan F. Hathaway of Boston, a niece, having withdrawn their objections.

Miss Folger, who lived at 16 Chisholm park, Boston, died April 7 last, leaving an estate of \$60,000. She left legacies of only \$50 each to her nephew and niece.

The public bequests mentioned after the personal legacies are \$5000 each to the North Congregational Church, the Historical Society, the Coffin school and the Nantucket Relief Association, all of Nantucket; \$2000 each to the Nantucket Atheneum and the Educational Society at Nantucket; \$1000 to the Union Benevolent Society at Nantucket, and \$500 each to the Industrial Union Association and the Maria Mitchell Association.

The will was executed Feb. 11, 1908. Under it Martha A. Moulton receives \$1,000; Allen Folger, an uncle, \$10,000; Charles F. Paine, \$3,000; Rachel and Lizzie Swain, \$500 each; Mrs. G. G. Pinkham, \$1,000; Mrs. Lucretia F. Gardner, \$3,000; Miss Florence Adams, \$400; Miss Elma M. Noyes, \$4,000; Mary Folger Marks, \$1,000; Miss Aggie M. Gage, former housekeeper of the aunt of the testatrix, \$3,000; Mary Sanford Mitchell of Nantucket, \$500; Mary Lizzie Starbuck of Nantucket, \$200; Hepsis R. Rogers McCleave, \$100; H. E. Paine, \$1000.

The Coffin school, the Historical Society and the North Congregational Church of Nantucket are named as residuary legatees.

Sept. 24, 1904



### The McCleave Museum.

Everyone who has visited the island of Nantucket within the past half century must have seen the McCleave Museum. It was one of the many places that seemed to be a part of the quaint town itself.

The museum was founded in 1842 by Mrs. Robert McCleave. For the last 20 years the entire revenue, amounting to about \$500 per annum, has been used solely for charitable purposes. The owner died two years ago, and the collection passed into the possession of her son, a resident of California. He seemed to have an idea that the museum should realize a fabulous amount. Several liberal offers were made for its purchase by wealthy men who were desirous of seeing it kept intact, but they found it impossible to satisfy the owner, and it remained for a Boston dealer in antiquities to become its possessor. This was brought about after a summer of hard work and a great deal of ingenuity on the part of the dealer.

A few pieces of purely local value in the collection were of special interest to the Nantucket Historical Society. There was a mild controversy extending through three months, and finally there was an auction sale, and the society made its purchase and the dealer bought 2000 pieces with the original cabinets—in fact, all that was worth bringing away from the island.

The collection consists of models of ships, whaling implements and weapons of war in the South Sea Islands, specimens of colonial history, shells, etc. Among the latter was a pair of orange cowries, mappa cowries, rare cones, bivalves and tritons. There is a complete model of a Nantucket whaling ship made by Mrs. McCleave's husband, a full-rigged ship carved out of ivory and ebony, a South Sea Island catamaran, etc.

Among the whaling trophies is a collection of husks which is considered one of the finest in America. These show specimens of work done by sailors, who worked them out of the whale's bone and ornamented them with amusing designs in scrimshaw patterns. There is an old-fashioned yarn-holder, also specimens of land sea bird skins and reptiles in alcohol. There is also colonial money, a pair of corsets worn more than a hundred years ago, samplers, a silk calash and innumerable other queer and interesting relics. A South Sea Island club is decorated with human teeth and bones, and another, used as an emblem of high office, shows exquisite carving done with a piece of shell.

There have been numerous inquiries from all over the United States regarding this collection by those who wish to possess single specimens. The present owner is determined, however, that it shall be sold as a whole. It is probable that his wish will be realized, as the school committee of a city not far from Boston has shown great interest in the exhibit and it is possible that it may be placed in the high school there and be an object lesson for the pupils.—[Boston Transcript.

Feb. 25, 1897

### Alexander Starbuck.

From New Bedford Mercury.

Alexander Starbuck, who died Tuesday in his adopted home of Waltham, came from one of the oldest families associated with Nantucket. The Starbuck name was connected with the early days of the island much in the same way that the Russell and Rotch names cling to the history of New Bedford.

It was because of his family's association with the whaling industry of Nantucket, coupled with a natural taste for things historic, that he wrote the book by which he will always be remembered in this vicinity. Mr. Starbuck's career was that of a newspaper editor and publisher in Waltham, but New Bedford will think of him as the Nantucket man who wrote the "History of the American Whale Fishery."

The history was written back in the seventies, when Mr. Starbuck was a young man. The years that have past since then have done much to give it the air of an authoritative work for the story of whaling down to 1877.

And certain it is that no one at the present day could hope to compile the vast mass of descriptive matter and of true yarns of the sea that Mr. Starbuck collected in his work. The sources that he drew from have, many of them, disappeared, and it is fortunate indeed that he conceived and wrote the book when he did.

The same thing may be said of Macy's "History of Nantucket," a much earlier work which contains much historic material in regard to whaling and from which Mr. Starbuck derived facts and inspiration.

The importance of the "History of American Whale Fishery" becomes evident when one reads more recent books relating to the subject. These books draw liberally from Starbuck, quote him freely, refer to him time and time again—in fact, they could not have been written half so easily or so well without him.

### "Open House" by the Historical Association Sunday, Sept. 21.

Editors of *The Inquirer and Mirror*:

The six exhibits of the Nantucket Historical Association, all island assets which attract thousands of visitors each year, will be open to the general public on Sunday afternoon, September 21, between the hours of 1 to 4 p.m. This is the second such "Open House Day" in recent years, and the Association is hopeful that a large number of islanders will again accept the invitation. There will be no admission charge.

On Broad Street, the Whaling Museum houses one of the best collections of the once famed industry which may be found anywhere in this country. Here is a whale-boat which was actually lowered from a ship; the 18-ft. long whale's jaw with its ivory teeth; a replica of the try-works, used on board ship for boiling out oil; the only remaining beam-press for candle making from sperm-ceti oil still in its original location; a wonderful collection of harpoons, lances and whale spades; the complete assembly of Sankaty Light's original standard and lens; scrimshaw, portraits, engravings, and the Library where the old whaling log books are kept.

### Alexander Starbuck's Life Work The History of Nantucket.

Alexander Starbuck, of Waltham, president-emeritus of the Nantucket Historical Association, has completed his manuscript on the history of Nantucket—a work which his friends and acquaintances have been anticipating for many years, with the knowledge that Mr. Starbuck was gradually drawing his material together and getting it in shape for printing.

There is no one who has a better knowledge of Nantucket history than Alexander Starbuck. For years he has been gathering together valuable records and data which he has carefully verified in every way possible, the whole making the real history of the island from the time of its discovery.

When published, the volume will cover about 1000 pages. The contents will be, in part, geological history; discovery by Northmen; settlement by Macy and others; Insurrection of Half Shares men during King Philip's War; annexation to Massachusetts; Indian troubles; Revolutionary War; War of 1812; general events to date; anti-slavery; churches; tragedies of whaling; ecclesiastical history; traditions and legends; tabulated story of the voyage of every whaling vessel from Nantucket similar to that made for the government and printed in the History of Whale Fishery; genealogy of Barnards, Bunkers, Coffins, Coleman, Folger, Gardner, Hussey, Macy, Starbuck, Swain and Worth families to 1760; and various other matters in connection with the history of Nantucket. It will be illustrated by many fine half tone pictures.

The Fair Street Museum and Friends Meeting House provide interest and lasting pleasure, as here is housed a rare collection of old china, glass, family portraits, furniture, curios and other relics of Nantucket. Two extraordinary Indian arrowhead collections are to be found here. Walter Folger's famous clock and telescope are on exhibition, and in the basement are two old fire engines, a sleigh, box wagon and other items. The Old Quaker Meeting House will also be shown. The latter is still used for worship during the summer months.

On Sunset Hill, the Oldest House has stood since 1686. Here is a remarkable old dwelling, famed throughout New England. Jethro Coffin and his wife Mary Gardner were the first owners and then it passed into the keeping of several other island families. The old fireplaces, exposed beams, details of wall construction and other features make it particularly interesting.

At the end of Vestal Street, the ancient Old Nantucket Jail, built in 1805, is an unusual exhibit. Restored by the Association soon after it secured possession a few years ago, it has been visited by many people. Of log-cabin type construction, sheathed and shingled, its rugged construction may easily be seen through examina-

tion of its interior. Heavy doors, huge iron bars and strapping give evidence of its strong-box reputation. A replica of the old stocks is in the inside yard. Nearby is the "House of Industry and Correction," originally built at Quaise Farm in 1826 and moved to this spot one hundred years ago.

Nantucket's Old Mill is the most unique of all the island landmarks. Severely damaged by the great gale of last February, it has just had its arms, vanes, and main shaft restored, so that once again the familiar skyline of old Nantucket is complete. Here are many features of an unusual type—the grinding apparatus, the lever for lifting the stone, the heavy beams framing the mill and, outstanding, the wooden machinery which is operated by the turning vanes. During the two hundred and six years since its erection, the Old Mill has been an integral part of our island life.

There can be little doubt about the value of the newest addition to the distinguished list of the Historical Association exhibits—the "1800 House" on Mill Street. Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Allen Melhado, the local society was presented the old James House for preservation. Under the experienced direction of Everett U. Crosby, this house was restored to as near its original condition as possible. Local artisans did the work, Clarence Swift as carpenter and Oswell Small, painting. In furnishing the house Mr. Crosby was assisted by Mrs. Nancy Adams, Custodian of Collections, and Dr. William E. Gardner. The result has been one of the prize exhibits of the Association, and the creation of another island asset.

A group of members and officers of the Association will act as hosts during "Open House Day." It is hoped that as many islanders who can do so will accept the invitation to be the guest of the "Historical."

Children should be accompanied by adults.

E. A. Stackpole,  
for the Council,  
Nantucket Historical Association.

Sept. 13, 1952



# OLD NANTUCKET

The whaling prosperity and the life of the early settlers have been preserved through the priceless possessions of the

## Nantucket Historical Association

They are so varied, that the preferences of visitors are sure to be satisfied, yet a majority of people endeavor to visit all, as follows:

**WHALING MUSEUM:** It contains world-renowned and unrivaled collections, showing the romance of the sea and the adventures of whaling. (near the Steamboat Wharf.) Open Weekdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**FAIR STREET MUSEUM and adjoining QUAKER MEETING HOUSE:** These hold a vast assembly of the possessions of bygone generations of Nantucket families. The antiques one dreams about. (on Fair Street near the Pacific Bank.) Open Weekdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**OLDEST HOUSE:** Built in 1686. An early settler's type of building, preceding the Colonial. It contains appropriate furniture. (a short walk to the north, near the Hospital.) Open Weekdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**WIND MILL:** Erected 1746. The Island's outstanding landmark. (follow Pleasant Street south from Main Street near the Monument.) Open Weekdays only, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**OLD GAOL:** Built of logs reinforced by large wrought iron rods. A notable primitive prison. Learn the history and about some of its past inmates. (on Vestal Street near Upper Main Street.) Open Weekdays only, 10 a.m. to 12 and 1 to 5 p.m.

**1800 HOUSE:** Built 150 years ago. Long occupied by the High Sheriff. Elaborately furnished from the period furnishings of the Association. Both house and contents completely representative of the early period of whaling prosperity and growing affluence. (off Pleasant Street.) Open Weekdays only, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

50 cents admission to each exhibit, except no charge for Mill or Gaol, but visitors are asked to give a donation toward the upkeep of these old buildings.

Old Mill with his skill as one of the many fine craftsmen of the island. Mr. Everett U. Crosby continues the work of restoring and furnishing the "1800 House" which now shows the results of his long experience and research in the things of Nantucket that can be kept "95 Per Cent Perfect". Mr. Burnham N. Dell has associated the Old Jail with the early customs in penology with all their crudeness as visible in this old log structure.

June 13, 1953

## 100 Rare Gifts Given To Historical Group

More than 100 rare and price-less gifts have been given to the Nantucket Historical Association during the past year, Mrs. Nancy S. Adams, custodian of collections, announced this week. Many of the gifts are unusual and of historical import and will be noted in Mrs. Adams' report at the Association's annual meeting July 15.

A valued gift is a San Domingo mahogany low poster bed from the attic of the Codd House on Orange Street. On view at the Association's 1800 House, the bed has a heavy hand woven canvas or sail-cloth tacked to roller bars on either side of the bed and laced to rollers, top and bottom, so that when tightened it serves as the support for a feather-stuffed mattress.

On view at the Fair Street Museum is a collection of buttons, the gift of Herbert Crocker. The collection is arranged on cards and classified under birds and animals, jewels, military, story buttons, calico and jet. Mrs. Martin Foley and Mrs. Anton Nieburg, button collectors, assembled the collection for exhibition.

The last great loom used on the Island has come to the Association from Mrs. Lincoln Ceely. For many years the loom was used in weaving rag carpeting for Islanders by Mr. Ceely's father, Thomas. Also a gift of Mrs. Ceely is a hand-operated fog horn used by whalers and coasters. When restored the horn will be placed in the Whaling Museum.

Another gift of interest is a portrait of Hannah Macy Gardner painted in Hong Kong in 1812 by Lai Suns when Mrs. Gardner and her husband Captain Oliver Gardner called at that port aboard the ship Onward. Mrs. Althea Macy Sylvaro gave the painting of her grandmother to the Association.

June 26, 1953

## Historical Association Urges Preservation of Nantucket.

In the quarterly publication of the Nantucket Historical Association entitled "Historic Nantucket", readers will find a plea on its editorial pages for preservation of Nantucket's individuality. W. Ripley Nelson, editor of the quarterly, has put into words some of the reasons why Nantucket is acclaimed as a summer resort, and how the town's unusual atmosphere must be maintained.

Condemning the trend to "develop facilities which will make Nantucket just like any mainland resort", the magazine calls for Islanders and summer residents to "stand together and work together to preserve Nantucket so that it may be known always as a gracious and hospitable town. . . ."

The editorial emphasizes the number of communities throughout the country which are currently working on the "restoration of historic sites" and their dignified exploitation. The point made is that while these "historic sites" cost millions of dollars, the citizens of the communities concerned recognize the public interest in "living history" and have acted to develop profitable year-round businesses thereby.

Nantucket, on the other hand is unequalled in the number of its old buildings, its narrow streets, and points of interest, the editorial states, and declares that preservation and not restoration is all that is needed to secure Nantucket's individuality. Support of a preservation program is urged by the editor of "Historic Nantucket", who states that the first step is to increase the number of active members of the Nantucket Historical Association.

"The Nantucket Historical Association is not a private organization run by and for the benefit of a few persons," the editorial says. "It is a 'Public Trust' in which every resident has a vital interest. Let us make it even more than that, in short let us make it a 'Nantucket Family Trust' run by and for the benefit of all."

It is stated that at least one active membership for each Island and summer resident is a goal not beyond reason, and that such a group would insure a cooperative working force which would exercise moral and active support for preserving Nantucket as a living, growing memorial and not just a monument to the past. "Such support above all would insure vigilance for the maintenance of Island traditions and control over undesirable influences."

The editorial ends with the statement that "Nantucket's problem compared with that of other communities is relatively simple for it is 'Preservation' and not 'Restoration'. Community spirit and cooperation is all that is needed and the Nantucket Historical Association is a logical channel through which both can be constructively developed and guided. It is ready to do its part."

The editors of The Inquirer and Mirror wish to commend "Historic Nantucket" on its stand with regard to Nantucket's future, and to promise cooperation and support with regard to the future activities of the Nantucket Historical Association in behalf of our island.

Oct. 24, 1953

## Summer Custodians of Buildings Of Historical Association.

Ten custodians have been appointed to welcome the 25,000 men, women and children who will visit the seven exhibits and buildings of the Historical Association this summer. They have a big part in making the visitors talk about the unique history of the island, repeating good stories and increasing the popularity of Nantucket.

If they happen to visit the Whaling Museum when "Capt." Long (Wallace N. Long, custodian) is in a talkative mood (and he usually is) they will never forget his yarns about Zeb Tilden and the wreck of the "Essex". In the library with the famous whaling logs and marvelous collection of marine books and papers is the librarian, Miss Helen Winslow, island bred but now in Wisconsin at the University and teaching in the High School at Menomonee Falls. Miss Winslow will guide visitors to fascinating stories and pictures of life at sea. Mrs. Bernice W. Foye with a cordial and sprightly welcome will meet them at the door of the Museum, take their admission fee and tell them about things they should not miss; and if there are children, twelve or under, admit them free, but only after they have signed their names in the Children's Guest Book (young ones do it with difficulty and pride—tongue extended).

At the Fair Street Museum, Mrs. Alma F. Backus after twenty years of receiving visitors can put one in the path of his interest. Upstairs Mrs. Bessie G. Winslow also for twenty years has helped visitors with their genealogies revealing to many they have the blood of Nantucket families in their veins and must be careful or they might pass a "cousin" on the street without speaking.

Miss Ethel C. Clark has been at the Oldest House seven years; her interest in this 1686 structure and its furniture and stories has had much to do with the doubling of the attendance.

Mr. John E. Greene will again be the "miller" and the Old Mill under his guidance becomes dusty-white and fragrant with the odor of crushed corn; after many years in telephone work he is interested in the wonders of mechanics and, if the visitor is interested, he will make clear the mystery of the old wooden cogs and big mill stones as they obey the forces of the winds.

The Old Jail is shown by a custodian who truly appreciates and makes a visitor appreciate, the hardships of prison life in a four cell building of logs.

The custodian of the "1800 House" will soon show the visitor that he is not in a museum but in a successful whaler's home of the early eighteen hundreds with its fireplaces, paneling, keeping room and spinning room.

Miss Bertha M. Eckert is added to the staff this year and assists in certain exhibits; she was formerly with the National Y.M.C.A., now in Nantucket she is deeply interested in the island's history.

Behind all these custodians are the chairmen of the various exhibits and buildings. Mrs. Nancy S. Adams has been connected with the Fair Street Museum for over 25 years. Mr. W. Ripley Nelson has taken on the Whaling Museum and has supervised much needed repairs. Mrs. Lewis S. Edgerton is directing repairs at the Oldest House and adding new articles of furniture and "fixings".

Mr. Earl Ray is giving much thought to the preservation of the



## Address of H. Addington Bruce at Historical Meeting.

The address of H. Addington Bruce at the annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Society, last week, in connection with the dedication of the Whaling Museum, was a tribute to the late Admiral Folger, through whose will the Nantucket society is to benefit to a large extent. Mr. Bruce was a personal friend of Admiral Folger and his remarks were listened to with keen interest by all. He said:

"A few days ago a visitor to this museum now receiving its dedication, told me that it is undoubtedly the finest museum of its kind in the world. I could appreciate his enthusiasm when Mr. Macy was kind enough to show me through the museum the other morning.

A first glance at once suggested the idea that you have here, in epitome, an objective history of all aspects of the industry that meant most, in many ways, to Nantucket in so much of her history. Closer examination confirmed this idea, and brought much else to mind. It left me, as probably nothing else could, with a very definite impression of the traits of the bygone men of Nantucket and of the forces, animate and inanimate, against which they contended, the daring with which they confronted these, the skill and determination with which they overcame them.

So that I was not surprised when, entering the room in which are hung the portraits of the whaling captains, I found there a most revealing and most appealing collection of studies of human personality. The descendants of these captains have reason to be proud of their forebears, as these portraits show them—men of character, of high intelligence, of fine endeavor.

The pity of it that in our modern age of comfort, of conveniences, of luxury, of competition not for life but for easy living, faces like the faces of these men are not so readily to be assembled by the artist as in the years when the whalers of Nantucket voyaged the world over.

Yet I will say that in the Nantucket of today I have noted some such faces, testifying that the old-time standards of the fathers still to some extent remain.

And from the room of the portraits I passed to another room of special interest to me—the William M. Folger Memorial Room. It was my privilege to know the late Admiral Folger somewhat intimately in the closing years of his life.

We were fellow members of the Algonquin Club of Boston, which was his winter home, and I also knew him in his summer home at Cornish in New Hampshire.

There I often saw the Admiral strolling through his garden, or taking his ease on the verandah that commanded a vista of magnificent Mount Ascutney, or reading in his den, surrounded by the highly prized naval prints and souvenirs of his own naval career which you of Nantucket now hold in perpetuity as a legacy from him.

The portrait hanging in the Memorial Room is a portrait chiefly of Folger the warrior and commander. It depicts him, no doubt faithfully, as he was at the height of his career.

Always, indeed, he remained in some degree the disciplinarian this portrait indicates, and his name has become traditional in the Navy as that of a man who, rightly, insisted on prompt and unquestioning execution of orders.

We of the Algonquin Club, however, knew him less as Folger the disciplinarian than as Folger the humanist, Folger the man of alert intelligence, a keen sense of humor, and a deep interest in his country's affairs.

At one end of the Algonquin Club's long living room, before the fireplace, there is a chair, still known as the Admiral's chair, which Admiral Folger invariably occupied, to read or to discuss with little groups of friends the happenings of the day. But the Admiral lived and thought not for the day only. As a few of us knew he was profoundly interested in that baffling yet fascinating and most important problem, the problem of what happens after the death of a body. In his quest for enlightenment as to the persistence of the soul he was tireless—reading, thinking, experimenting.

When the time came for him to achieve the certain solution to be had by passing personally through the ordeal of death, Admiral Folger faced that ordeal with the same resolution and high-hearted courage that had distinguished his warrior days.

His last illness was a torturous one, but stoically the old Admiral endured to the last, even contriving a jest when racked by pain. I was one of the little group that stood with the Admiral's sister and daughter, in a flood of sunshine, when the farewell salute was fired and "Taps" mournfully sounded on the hillside in beautiful Mount Auburn Cemetery where he sleeps the long sleep.

You, the people of Nantucket, are now Admiral Folger's inheritors, and eventually will possess, because of his abiding interest in the island home of his ancestors, a beautiful edifice for the housing of your treasure trove of history. It is indeed to be treasured by you.

Some one, Macaulay I think it was, once observed that a people not interested in their history will not long have a history to be interested in. I do not believe there is any danger of the people of Nantucket ever failing to be interested, sincerely interested, ardently interested, in the personages and events and remains of their island's glorious past.

AUGUST 2, 1930

## Citizens' Association of Nantucket.

Stanley Edwards Johnson, a former principal of the Nantucket High School, has now gone from his summer home at Bath, N. H., to Clearwater, Fla., where he spends the winter months. Mr. Johnson recently came across a book of interest to Nantucket, but he does not quite know how it happened to get up there in New Hampshire.

The book contains the Constitution and By-laws of the Citizens' Association of Nantucket, an organization which seemed to have a brief existence in 1893 and 1894. The membership fee was 25 cents and the book makes notation of those who paid up. Each member signed his name in the book and there was a total of 297 members. Only two of them are now living, so far as we can note—Frank H. Thurston and George W. Burgess.

## Beneficiaries In Mitchell Will Learn of Involved Matters.

The several Nantucket Institutions who became beneficiaries of trust accounts under the will of the late Sidney Mitchell were informed this week by Miss Grace Henry, representing the executors, that the accountants had concluded their appraisal of the estate and had found it greatly involved.

When Mr. Mitchell died in March of this year, it was understood that he had willed munificent sums to a number of the island institutions as trust funds. It was an example of his devotion to the home of his ancestors and his own summer home.

Unfortunately, the decline in the value of the stocks owned by Mr. Mitchell has put them far below their par value, so the estate has appreciably declined. However, it is known that they are stocks of sound integrity and are merely reflecting the times, with every prospect of rising to normal values.

This, however, was more or less realized by the various organizations, and an announcement was made some time ago by the trustees of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital, (one of the beneficiaries), that the original large bequest's income would not be available for some considerable time.

Through their representative, Miss Henry, the executors of the estate informed the interested parties that the appraisal has shown two separate accounts, one, Mr. Mitchell's estate, the other the estate of his mother Helen Leeds Mitchell, of which he was the trustee.

The next step to be taken by the executors is to present the result of the accountants' appraisal to the courts and seek a decision on how the two estates will be regarded in the final disposition of the funds under the will.

The six island institutions which are beneficiaries are the Unitarian Church, the Nantucket Cottage Hospital, the Coffin School, the Nantucket Historical Association, the Atheneum Library and the Old People's Home.

A number of individual persons residing here are also to receive certain bequests under the will.

## Nantucket Societies Benefit by Miss Channing's Will.

Under the will of Miss Eva Channing, for many years a well-known summer resident of Siasconset, the Nantucket Historical Association and the Coffin School Association receive bequests. William F. Macy, of Nantucket, is named as executor of the will, which was filed in the Suffolk Registry of Probate on Friday of last week.

Miss Channing was the granddaughter of the Rev. William Ellery Channing, for many years pastor of the Arlington Street Church in Boston. For a number of years she has resided at Hotel Hemenway in Boston during the winter months, coming to her 'Sconset home for the summer.

Under her will she leaves to the Nantucket Historical society her collection of blue china, now at Siasconset, and to the Coffin Association of Nantucket the sum of \$1,000. She leaves half the residue of her estate to the Boston League of Women Voters and the other half to the College of Liberal Arts, Boston university. The will makes nine other \$1,000 public bequests. To two cousins, Ella C. Eustis and Emily E. Jeffries, the will leaves the four pictures selected for Dr. Channing, her grandfather, by Washington Allston, the painter.

## Conductor's Brass Button.

George Bromley handed us an interesting relic last Saturday morning—a button from the coat of the conductor of the Nantucket Railroad. It was found while the street department truck was working near the fair grounds, on the route of the departed railroad line. The button bears the word "conductor" on its face and there are many who will well recall the "brass-buttoned" blue coat which the conductor always wore. The relic will be placed with other mementoes of the Nantucket Railroad now in the Historical Society's collection.

## Nantucket Historical Association.

Miss Susie W. Haggerty of Jamaica Plain, has presented to the Nantucket Historical Association a number of valuable ancient documents found in an old secretary formerly the property of her great grandfather, James Bunker, who was town clerk from 1830 to 1844, and also a quill pen used by him in making the town records before the steel pen was invented.

## Donor's Name.

At a recent meeting of the N. H. A. Council, the members were much gratified at learning that the unknown benefactor whose generosity had enabled the Historical Association to pay off the mortgage on the Meeting House in 1895, and later to obtain possession of the Old Mill, was Miss Caroline L. W. French, whose interest in the association has shown itself in many ways. The Council unanimously adopted resolutions expressing their appreciation of Miss French's great generosity.



### An Old Memorandum Book.

We have been privileged to examine the memorandum book of Nathaniel Coleman, bearing entries from 1772 to 1804. The book was presented to a Nantucket person by a Boston lady who found the relic with other ancient documents pertaining to Nantucket among her grandmother's effects. Who was Nathaniel Coleman? she asked. It has been found that Nathaniel Coleman was the lady's grandmother's great-grandfather. And probably for half a century this book has been absent from the island and preserved by its several custodians with filial reverence. Nathaniel Coleman was the register of deeds for Nantucket from the 3d of August, 1785, till the 20th of January, 1804. In book 17 of the land records of Nantucket he recorded his last deed, and commenced the writing of another which he never finished. His handwriting was legible and regular, and very different from that of William Hussey, jr., who succeeded him and who finished the record Nathaniel Coleman commenced. Just why the work of finishing the record of this deed was left for another, we have not yet ascertained. Nathaniel Coleman was the only son of Barnabas and Elizabeth (Barnard) Coleman, although he had eleven half brothers and sisters by his step-mother, who was Rachel Hussey before her marriage. Barnabas was the son of John 3d, grandson of John 2d, and great-grandson of John 1st, the latter being the son of Thomas Coleman, who arrived at Boston June 3, 1635, and came to Nantucket in 1680, and died in 1682.

This memorandum book possesses a peculiar charm for the antiquarian, and will doubtless sometime find its place among the collections of the Nantucket Historical Society. It is not only valuable as an ancient relic of departed days, but it contains references by book and page to many land transactions, such as the laying out of the different divisions of the island by the first settlers and later sub-divisions of the same. There are tables showing the difference between lawful money and sterling, and how to calculate the difference between New York, Philadelphia and Halifax money. A few of the entries will show the careful method of Nathaniel Coleman in keeping the run of his affairs more than a century ago, and we make selections at random as follows:

Squam bank 55 paces from the west side of ye house to ye edge of ye bank in 1792.

Squam bank in 1795 is 48 paces from the west side where our house stood to ye edge of ye bank.

In 1778 634 paper dolls for one hard doll.

Zeph Coffin born 27 January 1746.

Aug 1785 an act passed one shilling duties on deeds.

Hired my house to ye Bank ye 23d Feby 1796—45 dolls a year.

The whole votes is 373 in April 18, 1791. N. C. got 236; W. Folger got 70; S. Starbuck got 7. [This was the vote that elected him recorder of deeds.]

Selectmen 1793: Micajah Coffin, Alex Gardner, Geo Folger, John Pinkham, Obed Hussey, Silvanus Macy, Zachus Hussey.

£20 for a cows common is 50s. for one sheep common.

Abram Coleman [his son] sailed from Nantucket to York 27th 12 mo, 1799.—Sailed from N. York ye — Arrived in York ye 19th Sept 1800.—Arrived at Nantucket 29th do 1800.—Abram sailed from N. York Feb. 14, 1800 for London. Direct a letter to Widow Gaitskill, Wapping 332.

Albert [his son] sailed for Brazil ye 11th day Sept 1792 with David Giles.

The first deed I recorded was ye 3d Aug 1785.

Barnabas Coleman and Rachel, his wife, the number of their children & grandchildren & great-grandchildren in 1796—children 13; grand-children 113; great-grandchildren 85.

Washed sheep for Mary Barnard at east pen 17; at west pen 6—23.

Built my house in 1750.

Went to Nova Scotia in 1762.

Widow Judith Hussey's sheep mark is a crop in the left ear & a slit in the same, and a fork in the right ear & a half-penny under & a top of the fork.

Contract made between Job Chase and Nathl Coleman ye 15th 5th m, 1801—that is Job is to give N. Col. 16 dolls for his Clash & to take it out in carpenter work as witness my hand—

Nathl Colemans water lot layed out in 1767—then I had 98 sheep cotamons—742 in ye share.

Boy Shubael Hussey came here to live with me ye 1 July 1795.

Cr Benj Jones for soling my shoes March 1795. 2s, 9d.

Harlem's Oil made in Holland good for gravel and cholick.

Nathl Colemans land on the south line is 5 rd & 19 1/2 twenty fiftths of a rd where his house stands measured in 1794.

Benj Barnard come here to live with me ye 22d March 1794 & and is to have 10 bushels corn.

In the wallet part of the memorandum book, among other ancient papers was a show-bill of wonderful wax figures at E. Dixon's Inn, at Nantucket, for only 15 days. The writers of modern advertisements have not improved much over the attractive method of presenting the wonderful curiosities of this marvellous exhibition where the musical performance was to consist of a "concert organ, a tambourine and a tryangle." Charlotte Annie Maria Corde and Daniel Lambert in wax, with paintings of the Duke of Wellington and George Washington, and many other curiosities are announced. The show bill is illustrated with several wood cuts of curiosities.

March 17, 1900

### Historical Association Meets On Sunday Afternoon.

On this Sunday afternoon (Feb. 21) in the Maria Mitchell Asso.'s Library on Vestal street, the Nantucket Historical Association will hold its first mid-winter meeting in a number of years. The hour is 3:00 o'clock.

The meeting may more properly be termed a "gam." It is to be an informal get-together of members and friends of the Association, for the purpose of discussing prospective biographies of certain Nantucketers who have left their impress on the life of the island but, from a biographical standpoint, have never been "written up."

As an example, the late Miss Guli-elma Folger, E. B. Fox and Frederick Sanford deserve permanent places in the story of our community. Considerable is known about them, but none of this material has been collected for possible biographies within the meaning of the word.

A number of members will give short accounts of the lives of Miss "Elma" Folger, Lieut. Alexander B. Pinkham, Principal E. B. Fox and others. A cordial invitation is extended to friends of the Association to attend this meeting and join the informal discussion or listen—however the "spirit moves."

Anyone who has an anecdote or an interesting sidelight to contribute to the prospective biographies of "well-known yet unknown" Nantucketers—and it is hoped there are several—is urged to join in this "mid-winter gam."

Feb. 20, 1941 (?)

### Death of Henry B. Worth in New Bedford.

Henry Barnard Worth, lawyer and historian, died at his home in New Bedford last Tuesday morning at the age of sixty-five. The son of the late Calvin and Helen Worth, he was born in Brooklyn, but during most of his life he had been identified with interests in New Bedford and Nantucket.

Death was due to heart disease. Mr. Worth had been ill from time to time this winter. He had been confined to his bed a week ago by another attack, and was thought to be recovering from this when the fatal attack came.

For many years Mr. Worth has rendered a unique service to southeastern Massachusetts, where he became an authority on history of the section. He was particularly well versed on the lore of Nantucket. His knowledge on genealogical subjects was among the most profound of any person in this section.

He was vice-president of the Nantucket Historical Association and had for many years been one of its most active members.

Until recently Mr. Worth was secretary of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society, resigning because of declining health. As secretary he compiled masses of manuscript of great value from data he obtained in his historical and genealogical research. These manuscripts were deposited by Mr. Worth in the Old Dartmouth Society and Free Public Library archives.

Mr. Worth was born in Brooklyn in 1865. He received his early education in the schools of Nantucket. Later he was graduated from the Bridgewater Normal School, and then spent a year at Amherst College. He was admitted to the bar in 1885 and began his practice in New Bedford immediately afterward. He studied law in the office of late firm of Stetson & Greene.

Though born in Brooklyn, Mr. Worth is more commonly known for his Nantucket ancestry. He came from an old Nantucket family which had contributed widely to the history of the island. His father was Captain Calvin G. Worth, of Nantucket, who commanded whaleships and merchant vessels. Mr. Worth is of Mayflower and Revolutionary descent, including the Gardiners of Long Island and allied families.

Mr. Worth was twice married. He is survived by his second wife, who was Miss Emma Cleveland Higham.

He was a member of all the bodies of Free Masons in New Bedford, except the Blue Lodge. He was a member of the Union Lodge of Nantucket. His historical researches had been extended to a most extensive survey of the history of Masonry.

The funeral was held privately from his home Thursday afternoon. Burial was in Rural cemetery.

May 5, 1923

### Atheneum And Historical Society Get Bequests.

The death at Nantucket on May 10 of Miss Anne C. Swift makes possible the distribution of \$60,000 in public bequests under the will of her brother, William H. Swift of Pittsfield, an attorney, who died April 10, 1924, leaving \$656,730 in personal property and \$37,050 in real estate.

Section seven of Mr. Swift's will provided that after the death of his widow and two sisters, Misses Anne C. and Caroline E. Swift, the sum of \$10,000 each was to be paid to the Boys Club, Y. M. C. A., House of Mercy Hospital and Berkshire Atheneum and Museum, all four institutions of Pittsfield.

The Nantucket Atheneum is also to receive \$10,000 and the Nantucket Historical Association \$5,000. The Berkshire County House for Aged Women will also receive \$5,000.

Upon the death of several other annuitants, the House of Mercy hospital will receive \$90,000, Williams college and the American Board of Foreign Missions, \$100,000 each and the college, the American board and the Pittsfield Y. M. C. A. are the ultimate beneficiaries. Mr. Swift's personal property has greatly appreciated in value since his death.

May 31, 1930

### A Valuable Gift.

The Nantucket Historical Association has recently become the possessor of a valuable and interesting article, the history of which is linked with that of two families, well known in the past history of Nantucket. This consists of a large silver spoon, engraved with the name of John Hadwen Hosier, and is donated by C. Hadwen Crowley of this town. The story of it is as follows:

About the year 1750 two close personal friends, named Hosier and Hadwen, left Law Wrey, New Hawkshead, County of Lancashire, England, and came to America together, settling in Newport, R. I. Here, a few years later, a son was born to the one named Hosier, and named for the friend who came over with them, John Hadwen. In honor of the name, the child was presented with the silver spoon, engraved John Hadwen Hosier. This remained in the Hosier family until it became the possession by inheritance of the late William Hosier of this town, a great-grandson of the first owner. Shortly before his death he gave the spoon to Mr. Crowley, the great-great-grandson of the first John Hadwen. So, after nearly one hundred and fifty years, it once more returned to a descendant of the original giver, and now, through the generosity of Mr. Crowley, is secured forever to Nantucket's historical museum.

Apr. 16, 1910



## Historical Association Active Despite Season's Close.

Despite the closing of its various buildings and exhibits at the end of the summer season the Nantucket Historical Association is far from an inactive organization during the winter months. It still must play its part in helping to promote the economic welfare and life of the community, maintain and develop its properties and exhibits, and carry on its daily work of keeping contact with members, other historical associations, and the public in general, proof of which is found in some of its current activities.

There have been a number of changes by the action of the Council. Miss Ethel Anderson was elected a member of the Council and Secretary of the Association, succeeding, in the latter capacity, Mr. George W. Jones, who continues to serve as a Vice-President and member of the Council. Miss Anderson, in addition, has charge of all secretarial work of the Association office which, during the winter months, is located at 17 Fair Street, in space provided by President Adams in her residence.

Changes in the chairmanship of two buildings have taken place. Mrs. William Voorneveld, because of other activities, found it necessary to present her resignation as chairman of 1800 House which was accepted with regret. Mrs. Lewis Edgarton presented her resignation as chairman of the Oldest House which was prompted by her moving to Syracuse where her husband has entered into a new business. Her four years of service as chairman have been marked by significant restoration work and untiring effort in better preservation of the exhibits and their preservation. Her retirement is a distinct loss to the Association.

The Council has been fortunate in obtaining two successors. Mrs. John Bartlett, Jr., has been appointed and has accepted the chairmanship of 1800 House. Mrs. Bartlett is keenly interested in and aware of the problems of presenting to the public an exhibit such as this and for which she will serve as chairman.

The Council is exceedingly fortunate in having obtained Mrs. William Perkins' consent to serve as chairman of the Oldest House to which position she was appointed by the Council. Mrs. Perkins and her husband, who is Principal of the Cyrus Peirce School, have been interested students of Island history since they first moved here and have engaged in extensive research despite their many other activities.

At the 61st Annual Meeting of the Association, President Adams, in her annual address said: "We were never more certain that the future of our fine Association must be guarded by a younger generation of workers. How grand it would be to have half a dozen volunteers come along and say—'We are here to pledge our allegiance to the future of the Nantucket Historical Association.' The acceptance of this post by Mrs. Perkins is a prompt answer to this plea and the Council are not only gratified but hopeful that other members of the younger generation will follow closely as active workers for the Association to take over as the older workers are forced to lay down the reins.

As a Director at Large, President Nancy S. Adams attended the fall meeting of the Bay State Historical League at Groton, Mass., on Oct. 15.

The winter meeting of the Bay State Historical League will be held in Brookline on January 28, 1956, and the spring meeting will be held in Wellesley.

Mrs. Adams was pleased to hear many compliments about the Nantucket Historical Association's quarterly magazine "Historic Nantucket".

Oct. 22, 1953

## Historical Association Announces Open House

The Nantucket Historical Association will keep open house at the Fair Street Museum and the Oldest House and Whaling Museum on Sunday September 25. No admission will be charged between 2 and 5 o'clock.

These exhibits will then be closed for the season except the Whaling Museum which will remain open until October 12.

Sept. 14, 1955

## Historical Association Revamps Old Charter

Broadening elasticity of the activities of the Nantucket Historical Association will result from a revision of Public Welfare. George W. Jones, president of the Association, appeared in furtherance of the group's petition for a "change of purpose" clause in the charter. No opposition was raised and the petition will be granted.

Since the charter was formulated, the Association has progressed and grown and its various activities have been expanded by new gifts and exhibits, some in duplicate, as well as by the acquisition of historic buildings.

Authority was needed to supplement the provisions of the old charter so that holdings might be purchased or sold if need be and so that various items of exhibition might be lent or borrowed. The legal move, engineered by Grace Henry as attorney, is a modernization of the Association's working machinery.

Oct. 31, 1958

## "Thar She Blows!" Macy Tells Of "Nantucket Sleigh-ride."

From the Washington Post.

In a heavy sea some miles off the Isle of Nantucket in the early days of the last century, a boatload of whalers were being taken for a "Nantucket sleigh ride."

That's what the old whalers called the situation that often arose when a harpooned whale fled mightily over the bounding main, dragging a whale boat behind him.

On this particular occasion, several of the whalers noticed as they sped off on their involuntary roller-coaster ride that there was an empty whaleboat exactly like their own following them. But they were going unusually fast and soon outdistanced the empty boat, although not too far to notice that it collapsed instantly when it was caught by a sidwiping wave.

Later they figured it out. What had happened was this: Their own boat had been jerked away so fast by the fleeing whale that it had pulled the boat completely out from under its own coat of paint and what they had believed to be the following boat was merely the replica formed by the coat of paint standing in the ocean where they had left it.

At least, that's what they said, according to William F. Macy, president of the Nantucket Historical Association, and a lifelong Nantucker.

Mr. Macy is one of the few living links with Nantucket's historic past, for, as a small boy, he accompanied his father in 1871 on a visit aboard the barque, Amy, one of the last of the whalers which still docked on the Massachusetts isle in the final declining days of the industry. He remembers yet that his father's eyes were tear-dimmed as the two trod the oil-soaked decks of the aged barque.

"You see," said Mr. Macy, who is staying at the Occidental Hotel during his Washington visit, "from 1660 until 1840, the whaling industry centered in Nantucket, where the population went as high as 10,000 during the best days. Then the industry declined until 1871.

"Now the permanent population is but 4,000, although since Nantucket has become a great summer resort, as many as from 15,000 to 20,000 people stay there during the summers."

Today is many days away from the time in Mr. Macy's childhood when Nantucket's Orange street held the homes of 132 sea captains.

"And none of them were coast-craft-captains, either," said Mr. Macy. "Deep-sea captains, every one."

The only thing that really riles Mr. Macy these days, he explains, is to be introduced to an audience as a speaker who will discuss Cape Cod and the whaling days.

"They'd better smile when they associate me with Cape Cod," said Mr. Macy, every fibre of his loyal Nantucket soul enraged. "You know what we call Cape Codders? We call them 'coofs'!"

And a coof, we find, is an uncouth country lout, although the term is now used for almost anyone who does not actually hail from Nantucket.

Feb. 15, 1935



## Gifts Presented To Historical Group

Gifts of a china bowl, a framed photograph of the USS New Orleans, a silver spoon and loving cup, and 50 volumes of the Whalemens Shipping Lists, all of historical import here, have been presented to the Nantucket Historical Association.

The bowl, spoon and cup, and photograph are the gifts of Miss Margaret Folger of Portland, Me., daughter of the late Admiral William Mayhew Folger, and will be exhibited at the Fair Street Museum. Admiral Folger graduated from Annapolis Naval Academy in Nov. 1864 and was appointed a Rear-Admiral by President Theodore Roosevelt June 1, 1904. The books, gift of William H. Tripp of New Bedford, former curator of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, will be exhibited at the Whaling Museum.

The china bowl was picked up on Pitcairn Island by the ship Topaz. Officials of the Historical Association theorize that the bowl was part of the equipment of the ship Bounty and was carried ashore by the mutineers when they abandoned that vessel. The spoon, made in Japan, is ornamented with a replica of the USS Kearsage, commanded by Admiral Folger, and the photograph of the Orleans is the ship which the Admiral commanded during the Spanish-American War. The silver loving cup was presented to the Admiral by Admiral Higginson on the occasion of his second marriage.

The bound volumes of the whalemens shipping lists contain the voyages of all whaleships for 52 years from 1842 to 1900. Lists not only Nantucket ships but those from all the American seaports from which whalers sailed. Association officials point out that these documents will be invaluable in the study of the old time whaling industry and in geneological research. The books will be available for consultation at the Whaling Museum during the months it is open.

## Historical Association Exhibits Augmented by Several Gifts.

The Nantucket Historical Association has recently been the fortunate recipient of several interesting and valuable gifts which will be added to the exhibits at the Whaling Museum and the Fair Street Museum.

From Miss Margaret Folger, of Portland, Maine, the daughter of the late Admiral Folger, the Association has received a china bowl found on Pitcairn Island at the time of its discovery by the ship "Topaz". It is reasonable to assume that this bowl was part of the equipment of the ship "Bounty" and was carried ashore by the mutineers when they abandoned that vessel.

Also received from Miss Folger were a silver spoon made in Japan and ornamented with a replica of the "U.S.S. Kearsage" Commanded by Admiral Folger; a framed photograph of the "U.S.S. New Orleans" commanded by him during the Spanish-American war; and a silver loving cup presented by Admiral Higginson to Admiral Folger on the occasion of his second marriage. These items will be on display at the Fair Street Museum next summer.

The Nantucket Historical Association has also received as a gift from Mr. William H. Tripp of New Bedford, 50 bound volumes of Whalemens Shipping Lists. These documents cover the voyages of all whaleships for a period of 52 years, from 1843 to 1895, and include not only Nantucket ships but those from all the American seaports from which whalers set sail.

These papers will be of great value to all who are interested in the old time whaling industry and in geneological research. The books will be available for consultation and reference at the Whaling Museum during the months that it is open.

## Exhibit of Nantucket Railroad Relics at Island Service Co.

Through the courtesy of Mr. Robert Deeley the Council of the Nantucket Historical Association held its October meeting at the offices of the Island Service Company. This enabled the members to view the fascinating collection of relics, documents and photographs relating to the Nantucket Railway, collected by Mr. Deeley and now on exhibition at the Island Service Company. The railway which once connected the Town of Nantucket with Surfside and later with Sconset is not only an interesting episode in the history of this Island but, as a means of transportation in many ways unique, it has a place in the story of all American railways and their development.

The exhibition is open to the public and should be visited by everyone who has an interest in the Nantucket of pre-motor car days or in that era of railroading.

Oct. 20, 1956

## Island Railroad Mementos Displayed

The Nantucket Historical Association held its October meeting at the offices of the Island Service Company where a collection of Nantucket railroad memorabilia is displayed.

The exhibit, consisting of relics, documents and photographs of the now defunct railroad was collected and assembled by Robert E. Deeley, company president. It is open to the public.

The exhibit points up a segment of Island history in the pre-motor car days when the railroad operated between town and Surfside and later Sconset.

Oct. 19, 1956

## Mrs. Johnson Leaves Bequests To Island Institutions

Through the generosity of the late Pauline Mackay Johnson, several Nantucket institutions have been given bequests, through the Northern Trust Company of Chicago, Illinois. Prior to her death on November 12, 1958, Mrs. Johnson had established a trust, with an agreement that certain sums would be paid out of the fund upon her death.

The Nantucket Civic League has received the sum of \$1,000.00; the Nantucket Cottage Hospital \$2,000.00; the Nantucket Historical Association, has received \$3,000.00; and the Nantucket Athenaeum \$2,000.00.

Jan. 16, 1959

## Spermaceti Candles Produced Again

Around 1712, Captain Christopher Hussey and crew of Nantucket captured the first sperm whale whose superior oils soon made it more profitable hunting than the right whale.

As Hussey's crew and other whalers soon discovered, the head of the sperm whale contained a special cavity that yielded a pure, clear oil. After some experimentation, the Nantucket whaling men found that by pressing this oil several times under heavy weights and by filtering it again and again, there remained a pure, white waxy substance which was ideal for candle-making.

The importance of this discovery was soon broadcast throughout the New England coast and from there to the world. After centuries of burning tallow candles which filled his home with smoke, Mankind had uncovered Spermaceti wax which was the first commercially available product that burned in candles without smoking. It even had a faint, pleasant odor as it burned.

By the end of the 18th century, candles from this source were being made for lighting all New England's homes. The popularity of these New England candles grew throughout the world until the demand for more Spermaceti wax forced the people of Nantucket to build a special building near the wharfs in 1847 to house a giant press for extracting the wax from Sperm oil. Pressed into cake for easy handling, this wax was store there and it was not long before many tin candle moulds were made to produce the candles in the same building. From this building, Spermaceti candles were shipped throughout the world in wooden boxes, priced by the pound.

These Spermaceti candles were such a precious commodity that business transactions were often conducted, not in the coin of the realm, but in pounds of candles. There are records of real estate transfers, wages, and other transactions being paid for in these candles.

Eventually, these unique Spermaceti candles made their contribution to the world of science. They became the standard measure of artificial light throughout the world. The common term "candle power" is based on the light given off by a pure Spermaceti candle weighing 1/6 lb., and burning at the rate of 120 grains per hour. This measure of light is still used today to measure light.

The fatal blow to Spermaceti candlemaking (and to the whaling industry at large) came around 1860 when the discovery of kerosene for lamps heralded the end of candlelight as an essential household utility. Until the kerosene lamp became popularly accepted and economical, however, hundreds of thousands of Sperm candles were made in Nantucket. Today the whaling museum on Nantucket (housed in this same century-old candle manufactory) has displayed in a glass case the last candle made on Nantucket. It was part of a display from the Nantucket exhibition of 1897.

And so another era, both romantic and important commercially to Nantucket whalers, passed into the history of New England. However, the original old candle moulds just like those used on Nantucket are now being used to bring these unusual candles back to bring their light to New Englanders once more in the 20th century. They cost \$1.00 a pair and are available at The Four Winds Gift Shop on Straight Wharf—Advertisement.



### Death of Miss Starbuck.

The death of Miss Mary Eliza Starbuck on Saturday last, removes another well-known citizen, one who held the esteem of everyone, resident and summer visitor alike. Miss Starbuck was born on Nantucket, March 13, 1856, her parents being Charles E. and Lois N. (Pease) Starbuck. Upon the death of her father her mother married Captain James Wyer, of Nantucket. Thus, daughter and step-daughter of island whaling masters, with ancestry leading back to the first settlers of the island, Miss Starbuck was ever true to her island home and the traditions and history of Nantucket were her theme in life.

She was a brilliant woman, a delightful companion and associate, and always a pleasing conversationalist. She was one of the group which organized the Nantucket Historical Association in 1894 and she served for a number of years as its secretary. A veritable mine of information on matters pertaining to Nantucket's past, and blessed with a retentive memory, Miss Starbuck was often appealed to by those who sought the true Nantucket atmosphere.

A poetess of charm, a delightful story-teller, her well known book "My House And I" has become an intrinsic part of the literature of the island. At times she wrote for newspapers and magazines, as well as publishing short stories and brochures of poetry herself. Her last work was a series of reminiscent sketches, which she hoped would be published before she received the final summons.

Miss Starbuck's home on Pleasant street was the rendezvous for a wide circle of friends, as long as her health would permit, and many there are who will recall pleasant hours spent there in her company. Her health has been gradually failing during the last three years and some weeks ago she sought the comfort of the Nantucket Hospital, where she passed away last Saturday in her eighty-third year.

The deceased is survived by two nephews—Edward and John Starbuck, sons of her late brother, Henry P. Starbuck, who died in California some years ago. Mrs. Peter M. Hussey of Nantucket is a second cousin, but there are no other near relatives.

Funeral services were held Monday afternoon in the Episcopal church, the rector, Rev. Barrett Tyler, officiating. Interment was in the Prospect Hill cemetery.

### Mary E. Starbuck.

Miss Starbuck gone! It does not seem possible nor believable. It is like the passing of a very young person full of vigor, wit, and livableness. For in spite of her 81 years she still was all that to her friends.

Miss Starbuck was the poet of Nantucket, sprung from its soil, singing the whole island. I have never known anyone who so completely summed up within herself her whole native place. She was Nantucket and somehow the length and breadth and Soul of the Island were in her.

So much of her poetry has sunk into the very soil, I think I am one of many who never enter the harbor without saying to myself:

"Beyond the jetty and Brant Point Light,  
The Islander comes to his own."

And every time I say it—an emotion.

Also, I am one of many when I say Miss Starbuck was my first friend on the Island. We came to Churchhaven my husband and I, not knowing a soul in the town. But we had a letter of introduction to Miss Mary Starbuck. So on our first Sunday afternoon we found our way up Pleasant street and rang the queer little bell at her door.

Almost at once it opened and there was our dear-friend-to-be giving us the beautiful welcome that was to become for so many years my especial Nantucket expectation.

She took us into the lovely parlor, she lighted the fire, she began to charm my husband with her witty, wonderful stories. Then the fire grew too bright and she poured water on it from a tall brass pitcher. All this was a ritual. I cannot yet believe that I shall not go through that happy ritual ever again.

To me she is a great loss, and I wonder how I can reconcile myself to a Nantucket without her.

It is amazing how the pride, mentality, domination and strength of the old whaling captains could descend upon one sheltered woman, so she could walk down Main street in a sort of triumphal progress and make you believe that the old captains were there, indeed.

With all this she had a very feminine timidity which she flaunted rather than concealed, and which she sometimes pretended to have when she had it not. She remembered far, far back and she remembered the right things.

Her house—the cozy parlor, the living room where she put up the stove on a certain date and took it down on a certain date, regardless of the weather, the large kitchen with the ship-like cubby holes, the carpenter shop which was also a studio—all these are to me more like home than my own home in Nantucket.

How I wish this house at 8 Pleasant street could be kept with all the furniture intact, a memorial to the woman descended from the first white child born on the island, Mary E. Starbuck.

—Caroline Dale Snedeker.

### Bay State League Enjoyed Visit To Nantucket Island.

Over one hundred members of the Bay State Historical League came to Nantucket over the last week-end for their annual meeting. The organization is composed of members from the principal historical societies in the old Bay State, and this was the first time it has ever held an annual meeting on this island.

Headquarters for the League during its stay in Nantucket was the Gordon Folger Hotel, and it was to this establishment that the first arrivals were taken early Friday evening. On Saturday morning, Terry's sight-seeing bus took a capacity crowd for a trip about the island, while taxis accommodated all those who were unable to get a seat in the bus.

On Saturday afternoon, at 2:30, the League held its annual meeting at the Old North Vestry. With one hundred and twenty-four of the visitors on hand and a number of the local Historical Association's members present, the old meeting house was well filled when Vice-President A. Leon Cutler, of Groton, called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by the Rev. Evarts W. Pond, former pastor of the Congregational Church.

The League was then welcomed by Edouard A. Stackpole, President of the Nantucket Historical Association, who extended a greeting from the host society. He spoke a little about the historic meeting house in which they had gathered.

A message was then read by Secretary Henry W. Porter, coming from Judge Abner L. Braley, of Boston, the President of the Bay State League, who was unable to be present because of business.

The report of the Secretary, Mr. Porter, was read and accepted, as was the report of Treasurer Charles A. Hardy, of Arlington, and the auditing committee.

The roll call was an interesting procedure, with delegates from the various historical associations rising when the name of the society was called. The largest representation was from the Quincy Historical Association—with eighteen members present.

The report of the nominating committee and the election of officers followed. The secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the following:

President—A. Leon Cutler, of Groton.

Vice Presidents—Albion D. Wilde, Canton; Mrs. Ruth Dame Coolidge, Medford; Walter R. Meins.

Secretary—Miss Ruth F. Tinkham, of Taunton.

Treasurer—Charles A. Hardy, of Arlington.

Executive Committee—Henry W. Porter, Quincy; Channing Howard, Winthrop; Clarence B. Humphrey, Swampscott; Norman Talcott, Lexington; Frank Gaylord Cook, Cambridge.

Secretary Porter then made an announcement of the "Guest Day" at Provincetown meeting to be held on August 6—the first Saturday in August—when the Research Club, Inc., of that town has invited the League's members to attend a summer meeting in Provincetown.

"The Research Club, Inc., located in Provincetown the first landing place of the Pilgrims," said Mr. Porter, "It has a membership of more than eighty ladies, all of whom are of Mayflower lineage. This Club maintains an Historical Museum established by them in 1923.

"Besides this work they are engaged in historical study, and write and publish local historical papers, and are active in the preservation of the ancient landmarks."

The announcement of a fall meeting at Waltham was also made. Secretary Porter then read a poem entitled "Walden Pond."

As the representative of the Nantucket Historical Association, Edouard A. Stackpole then gave an informal talk on "Nantucket—and the Islands of the Pacific Ocean."

Following a few preliminary remarks, in which he sketched the rise of Nantucket as a whaling port, the speaker traced the courses taken by the Nantucket whalers in their discovery of the Atlantic whaling localities or "grounds," until the time they rounded Cape Horn in 1791.

The speaker then went on to tell about the first whaling in the great Pacific Ocean; of the discovery of the "off-shore grounds; "on the line" whaling; and the subsequent charting and discovery of a great many Pacific Islands in the Gilbert, Ellice, Caroline, Phoenix and other groups south and east of the Hawaiian group and near the Equator.

He mentioned some of the dangers which these whaleships had to meet; the remarkable length of their voyages, and the tremendous distances they covered.

He pointed out that the preservation of Nantucket as an historic community was a happy combination of circumstances which enables the island to boast of the least-spoiled example of early architecture to be found in this country today.

In bringing his remarks to a close, the speaker touched a bit on the heritage left by the old Nantucket whalers and expressed the hope that the tradition of their courage and loyalty to ideals would be emulated in present and future generations of islanders.

The ladies of the North Church served a most delicious tea in the adjoining Bennett Hall. While several of the delegates had to leave to catch the five o'clock boat back to the continent, the majority remained to enjoy the refreshments and spend an hour chatting with friends and acquaintances.

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The next morning, the League was present in a body at church services held in the Unitarian Church. The special sermon was preached by Rev. Harold L. Pickett, who gave a most eloquent and stirring address on "Some Religious Lessons From Secular History."



### Death of Miss Susan E. Brock.

Another of Nantucket's highly-respected citizens has passed to her reward. After about twenty years of illness during which she remained active in mind and spirit although unable to become active physically, Miss Susan E. Brock passed to her reward on Tuesday last at her home on Fair street, in the eighty-fifth year of her age.

She was the daughter of the late Capt. George H. Brock and his good wife Charlotte, and as a child of six years of age she accompanied her father and mother on a voyage around Cape Horn on the ship "Midnight"—an experience that remained vividly in her memory throughout her long life. Eleven years ago she published the story of this voyage of her childhood under the title "Doubling Cape Horn" and distributed copies to her friends and close acquaintances—a delightful memoir that all will prize the more now that she is gone.

Miss Brock has always been identified with Nantucket and for many years served as curator of the Historical Museum, during the years when it was steadily gaining in strength and activity. Much of the success which followed the organization of the society in 1894, and the accumulation of such a rare collection as it now possesses, was due to her interest and untiring efforts.

A lover of music and an accomplished pianist, Miss Brock for many years was a very popular teacher and many can well recall her painstaking efforts in giving them instruction on the piano. She was organist at the Unitarian church for a number of years and was a regular attendant as long as her health would permit.

Funeral services were held at her late home on Fair street at 10:30 on Thursday morning, conducted by the Rev. Harold L. Pickett, pastor of the Unitarian church, who paid a beautiful tribute to the memory of the deceased, incorporating in his remarks numerous extracts from "Doubling Cape Horn" which were particularly fitting at the close of such a long life. Interment was in the family lot in Prospect Hill cemetery.

### Miss Folger's Will Proven.

The will of Miss Susan Wilson Folger, containing \$26,000 in public bequests, was proved before Judge Morton in the supreme court on Friday week, Horace W. Folger of Winthrop, a nephew, and Susan F. Hathaway of Boston, a niece, having withdrawn their objections.

Miss Folger, who lived at 16 Ohisholm park, Boston, died April 7 last, leaving an estate of \$60,000. She left legacies of only \$50 each to her nephew and niece.

The public bequests mentioned after the personal legacies are \$5000 each to the North Congregational Church, the Historical Society, the Coffin school and the Nantucket Relief Association, all of Nantucket; \$2000 each to the Nantucket Atheneum and the Educational Society at Nantucket; \$1000 to the Union Benevolent Society at Nantucket, and \$500 each to the Industrial Union Association and the Maria Mitchell Association.

The will was executed Feb. 11, 1908. Under it Martha A. Moulton receives \$1,000; Allen Folger, an uncle, \$10,000; Charles F. Paine, \$3,000; Rachel and Lizzie Swain, \$500 each; Mrs. G. G. Pinkham, \$1,000; Mrs. Lucretia F. Gardner, \$3,000; Miss Florence Adams, \$400; Miss Elma M. Noyes, \$4,000; Mary Folger Marks, \$1,000; Miss Aggie M. Gage, former housekeeper of the aunt of the testatrix, \$3,000; Mary Sanford Mitchell of Nantucket, \$500; Mary Lizzie Starbuck of Nantucket, \$200; Hepsis R. Rogers McCleave, \$100; H. E. Paine, \$1000.

The Coffin school, the Historical Society and the North Congregational Church of Nantucket are named as residuary legatees.

### Presents Association With An Historic Compass.

Capt. Leland S. Topham has presented the Nantucket Historical Association a ship's box compass which is of historic interest.

The compass, in its original box, measures 8 1-2 inches in diameter and came from the three-master schooner *Charles Luling*, which was stranded on Nantucket Bar at 9:30 o'clock on the night of Nov. 18, 1904.

The schooner was trying to enter the harbor without a pilot and went onto the bar near the western jetty. Her sailors were taken off by a boat from shore manned by an island crew. The *Luling* was purchased as she lay and subsequently floated and towed into this port by the little fishing boat *Petrel*, of this port. The schooner had a cargo of coal and hailed from Grand Haven, Mich., having been originally built for service on the Great Lakes.

The compass was removed to the *Petrel* and became an important part of that little fishing steamer's career during the next twenty-five years. At the time the *Petrel* was tied up for the last time, the compass was purchased by Capt. Topham and subsequently used by him on his two boats, the *Cora* and the *Cachalot*.

### "Proceedings" of The Nantucket Historical Association For 1949.

The annual "Proceedings" of the Nantucket Historical Association for 1949 makes its appearance this week. A number of interesting articles are contained in the 64-page volume, and a list of the members is included.

Besides the reports of the various officers, the 1949 "Proceedings" has an important article on "William Mitchell of Nantucket," written by Miss Helen Wright, author of the biography of Maria Mitchell, "Sweeper in the Sky." A portrait of Mr. Mitchell by Mrs. Dassel illustrates this article, as well as an old view of Vestal street, half a century ago, showing the birthplace of William Mitchell, removed from its original location—site of present Methodist Church in 1822—and a view showing the Maria Mitchell Birthplace, the Observatory, and the Library, (the latter formerly William Mitchell's schoolhouse) of the Maria Mitchell Association.

Another interesting article is entitled "Some Incidents in the Seafaring Careers of Capts. Henry F. and Peter F. Coffin." This was originally written by John B. Coffin, and was recently presented the Association by his daughters, Mrs. Mildred Edgerton and Miss Adelaide B. Coffin.

A most readable letter written in Nantucket in 1835 is printed in its entirety. Miss Mary Cushing came to Nantucket to visit the family of the Rev. Henry Edes, then pastor of the Unitarian Church here, and was then engaged to Rev. Richard Edes, the resident minister's brother. One of the interesting comments contained in the letter was Miss Cushing's observation that Nantucket was "the most famous party-going place I ever knew!"

Through the interest of Miss Grace Brown Gardner, one of the Association's Vice Presidents, a photographic reproduction is shown in the "Proceedings" of Capt. Owen Spooner, the Nantucket whaler who discovered "sunset longitude." This is a copy of a portion of a painting of Captain Spooner made by James Walter Folger, the Nantucket artist, some 75 years ago. This painting now hangs in Miss Gardner's home.

In June, 1781, a Quaker preacher, George Churchman, visited the island. Prof. Henry Cadbury, of Harvard, made a copy of pertinent entries made by Churchman in his Journal at that time, and these are reprinted in this issue of the "Proceedings."

A list of Life, Sustaining and Annual members of the Association is included in the book.

### Presented Old Lantern to The Historical Society.

Capt. Leland S. Topham has presented the Historical Association a lantern with an unusual history. The lantern is of brass and came from the famous cutter *Acushnet*, which did so much work in these waters over a quarter of a century ago.

On January 31, 1916, the big steamer *Tampico* was stranded on Great Point Rip. Capt. Topham, then in charge of Coskata, took his life-boat and crew out to the big craft and was at the scene when the *Acushnet* arrived. The cutter's skipper gave the Coskata captain the lantern to be set in the bow of the life-boat for a bearing. During the ensuing activity of getting the steamer free, the cutter's quartermaster forgot to reclaim the lantern and it remained at the station over a period of years and was finally condemned by the inspector. Capt. Topham retained it as a memento of the experience.

### Civil War Relics Presented To Historical Association.

The Nantucket Historical Association was this week presented some valuable relics of the Civil War. The articles consist of boots, haversack, and bullets, a roll of the Nantucket men who served in the war, an old print of the opening day's engagement at Fredericksburg, and another colored print of the "Bloody Angle" at Spottsylvania. Included was a photo of the last three G. A. R. veterans on Nantucket—Comrades James H. Barrett, Josiah F. Murphey and James H. Wood—and a photo of a meeting of veterans at "Little Round Top," Gettysburg, in 1909.

The relics were originally presented by Byron L. Sylvaro Post, American Legion, by the late Josiah Murphey. The Legion recently voted to place the relics in the custody of the Historical Association. On Thursday morning, Capt. Leland Topham transported them from the Legion building to the Historical Rooms on Fair St.

JANUARY 21, 1950.



### Nantucket Historical Association.

The fifteenth annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association was held in the old "meeting-house" on Wednesday morning, and was well attended. The meeting was called to order promptly by the president at ten o'clock and the regular routine of business was proceeded with. The secretary's record of the annual meeting of 1908 was read and accepted. The reports of the curator, secretary and treasurer for the past year were read, and ordered incorporated in "the proceedings." They showed an excellent and gratifying condition of the association's affairs in all directions, and a conservative generosity on the part of those having in charge the carrying on of its business, and were liberally applauded as the reading of each was concluded. The president's annual address followed, and that also was ordered made a part of "the proceedings."

The report of the nominating committee being called for, the chairman of the committee presented the following list of nominees for the ensuing year:

President—Alexander Starbuck.  
Vice-Presidents—Henry S. Wyer, Mrs. Sarah C. Raymond, Moses Joy, Dr. Benjamin Sharp, Mrs. Judith J. Fish, Henry B. Worth.  
Secretary—Mrs. Elizabeth C. Bennett.

Treasurer—Henry S. Wyer.  
Curator and Librarian—Miss Susan E. Brock.

Councillors for Four Years—Mrs. Eleanor W. Morgan, John B. Folger. Auditors—Irving Elting, Miss Harriet A. Elkins, Edward A. Fay.

The report was accepted and it was voted to proceed to ballot. The president appointed Moses Joy and Arthur H. Gardner to distribute, receive and count ballots. The tellers reported 71 ballots cast, all in favor of the nominees reported by the committee, and they were declared elected.

The choice of a nominating committee for the ensuing year being next in order, the president called for nominations, and the following named members were nominated and elected, the committee of 1908 positively declining a re-nomination: Miss Emily Weeks, Arthur H. Gardner, Miss Mary E. Macy, Mrs. Madeleine (Fish) Severance and William F. Macy.

A very interesting letter written by Hezekiah Barnard, when he was serving as representative and before he was chosen state treasurer, to Grafton Gardner, was read by Miss Annie W. Bodfish. An equally interesting letter written by Capt. Seth Pinkham to the Hon. Barker Burnell just after the latter had been elected a member of Congress, and pointing out the importance of the whale fishery, was read by his great-grand-daughter, Miss Florence Bennett.

Henry B. Worth told the interesting story of a rare and valuable document which had accidentally come into his possession. It was the pew-book of the North Congregational church for 1784 and was as quaint in its amateur workmanship as it was interesting in the nature of its contents. It was put into the custody of the association with the understanding that it was never to be taken from the rooms, but should at all proper times be accessible to officers and members of the North Congregational Society and similar particularly interested parties. The association voted to accept the custody of the volume under those conditions.

The president read an account of the beginnings of the first normal school in the United States, which was opened in Lexington in 1839, the teacher being Rev. Cyrus Peirce, the first principal of the Nantucket High school.

Moses Joy made some interesting remarks concerning a contract for building a vessel at Brant point, a copy of which he had, the remarks being called out by seeing a lithograph on the wall of a picture recently painted by James Walter Folger.

James Carey spoke of the pictures on the walls made by Mr. Folger and said they could remain there if the association desired.

The meeting, which seemed to be of marked interest, adjourned at 11.45.

In the evening members and invited guests of the association—about one hundred and sixty in number—assembled at the Sea Cliff Inn to commemorate the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the purchase of Nantucket island, and the occasion proved to be one of the most enjoyable social events of the season. Like most Nantucket gatherings, the affair was entirely informal and for an hour or so before the banquet islanders and "off-islanders" chatted together in the spacious Sea Cliff parlors and started the ball rolling for the "real Nantucket time" which the event proved to be, with plenty of cordiality and well-wishing, in which the Historical Association and its successful, active life of fifteen years was not forgotten.

At 8.45 o'clock the gathering was summoned to the dining hall, where Landlord Folger had arranged the tables in an attractive manner for the gustatory portion of the evening's festivities. President Starbuck called the company to order and requested the Rev. F. W. Manning to invoke the Divine blessing, after which the attention of those present was called to the following:

MENU.  
Grape Fruit  
Quahog Chowder  
Olives Watermelon Pickles Radishes  
Broiled Nantucket Blue Fish  
French Fried Potatoes  
Chicken Croquettes with Peas  
Curacao Punch  
Roast Tenderloin with Mushrooms  
Roast Young Turkey Cranberry Sauce  
Baked Macaroni String Beans  
Potatoes au Gratin  
Sea Cliff Salad  
Charlotte Russe Lemon Meringue Pie  
Neapolitan Ice Assorted Cakes  
Young American Cheese Butter Thins  
Coffee

For over an hour the edibles were discussed and when "coffee" announced that the bottom of the most excellent bill of fare had at last been reached, it was nearing 10 o'clock. President Starbuck, after drawing the members of the gathering as near to the head table as possible, that they might miss nothing connected with the post-prandial exercises, addressed them as follows:

"Members of the Nantucket Historical Association and friends whom we hope to induce to become members:

The honor of calling you to order and welcoming you on this occasion really belongs to the two ladies of the 'Committee on Annual Meeting,' who have been obliged to assume the laboring oar in making all these arrangements, and to whom alone may fairly be attributed its delightful success. Even our good friend, Dr. Sharp, usually a help-meet for all the fair sex, and one of the original promoters of this meeting, as well as a

member of the committee, as the time approached to make effective the vote of the Council to observe in this way our 250th anniversary, incontinently and continentally fled, even making a European tour an excuse for avoiding his duty here. And so, then, to those two ladies, Miss Bodfish and Mrs. Bennett, who have indeed been busy Bs, who have so well performed the work, and who have asked me to call you to order, should be awarded the honors. We are here at home again. In the words of Martha Gilbert Bianchi:

"Back to the farm where the bob-white still is calling  
As in remembered dawns when youth and I were boys,  
Driving the cattle where the meadow brook is brawling  
Her immemorial wandering fears and joys.

Home to the farm for the deep green calms of summer,  
Life of the open furrow, life of the waving grain—  
Leaving the painted world of masquerade and mummer  
Just for the sense of earth and ripening again.

Down in the hayfield where scythes glint through the clover;  
Lusty blood a-throbbing in the splendor of the noon—  
Lying 'mid the haycocks as castling clouds pass over,  
Hearing insect lovers a-piping out of tune."

Or as Longfellow writes of his beloved Portland, with a more distinctly Nantucket flavor:

"Often I think of the beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea;  
Often in thought go up and down  
The pleasant streets of that dear old town  
And my youth comes back to me;  
And a verse of a Lapland song  
Is haunting my memory still:  
'A boy's will is the wind's will,  
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts!'"

It is the true Anglo Saxon love of the old home, such as Sheridan Knowles puts into the mouth of William Tell, when he pictures him as exclaiming in the exuberance of his joy:

"Ye crags and peaks, I'm with you once again!  
I hold to you the hands you first beheld  
To show they still are free. Methinks I hear  
A spirit in your echoes answer me  
And bid your tenant welcome to his home again."

And it finds a quieter but no less profound expression in Felicia Heman's "Hymn of the Vandois":

"For the strength of the hills we bless Thee  
Our God, our Father's God!  
Thou hast made Thy children mighty  
By the touch of the mountain sod."

And, finally, Montgomery most delightfully expresses this home sentiment in his charming poem:

"There is a land of every land the pride,  
Beloved by Heaven o'er all the world beside,  
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,  
And milder moons imparadise the night—  
A land of beauty, virtue, valor, truth,  
Time-tutored age, and love-exalted youth.  
The wandering mariner, whose eye explores  
The wealthiest isles, the most entrancing shores,  
Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,  
Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air.  
In every clime the magnet of his soul,  
Touched by remembrance, trembles to that pole.

For in this land of Heaven's peculiar grace  
The heritage of nature's noblest race,  
There is a spot of earth supremely blest,  
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,  
This is the spot."

And so here we are at home again, and it is our welcome opportunity to congratulate each other, and my pleasant duty on this occasion to welcome you all. You remember that one of the legends of our island says that Edward Starbuck accompanied Thomas Macy on his first pilgrimage to this promised land, and if on this occasion a descendant of Edward Starbuck

helps to pull an oar and trim the sails of this oratorical boat, I think you will agree with me that it is eminently fitting that a descendant of Thomas Macy should lead you on this post-prandial voyage of discovery; and so the ladies, with that intuitive sense of the "eternal fitness of things" so peculiar to their sex, have selected as the toast-master of the evening, Mr. William F. Macy, of Medford and Nantucket, whom I now present to you."



William F. Macy, Toastmaster.

In the selection of Mr. Macy to preside as toast-master of the evening, the ladies of the committee made no mistake, for when it comes to talking about Nantucket and Nantucketers, Mr. Macy is right in his element. His opening remarks were well-fitting to the occasion, notwithstanding the fact that he claimed to feel like the little girl sitting at the table on a well-worn copy of Webster's dictionary, who said "she felt uncomfortable because she was resting upon something so very old and she herself was so awfully new." The history of Nantucket is truly something quite old, but as the toast-master was able to look back eight generations and point with pride to his ancestor, Thomas Macy, as one of the original settlers, he proved himself not wholly "new" to the subject. In fact, there are few of us who have a better knowledge of the facts connected with the history of Nantucket than William F. Macy.

The first speaker introduced by the toast-master was Prof. E. C. Bolles of Tufts College, a man who claimed to know very little about Nantucket, having landed on the island for the first time but a few hours previous. This fact, however, did not debar him from addressing the assembly on "The Early Settlers of New England," and his talk was decidedly interesting to all.

The next speaker was Miss Florence Bennett, who was asked to speak on "The Price Paid for Nantucket." Miss Bennett is one of Nantucket's most promising young women, has an excellent and pleasing delivery, and is one who has already become well versed in historical matters. Although the island was bought for thirty pounds and two beaver hats over two hundred and fifty years ago, Miss Bennett thought that the generations following the period of the original settlers had helped pay their portion of the purchase price of the island, paying



a tribute to the men who brought Nantucket into fame as a prominent whaling port, to the wives and mothers who bore suffering and hardships decades ago, to the loyal sons and daughters of each passing generation who had worked for the betterment of their island home. Although brief, Miss Bennett's remarks were very interesting and she was warmly applauded.

The toast-master, after a few more well-placed remarks, interspersed with a couple of anecdotes, alluded to the wonders of the wireless age in which we are now living, but dreaded to think of the disaster which would befall the Historical Association should it be obliged to exist without the able services of its Wyer. Learning that the treasurer was at times poetically inclined, Mr. Macy called upon him for something which would be of interest to the gathering. Mr. Wyer said he felt like Jonah, when expelled from the whale's mouth—the unexpected always happened—yet he did have with him a poem "written by some enemy" of his, which he would read for the benefit of those present. Mr. Wyer thereupon read the following, which he called "Obadiah—His Lay," receiving a loud burst of applause at the close.

Some folks is alrays 'cruisin' round  
In search of new surprise,  
An' some keeps busy plannin' out  
Fer mansions in the skies,  
But, bein's I'm jest a common man,  
Says Obadiah Brown,  
Why, all I want's a roostin' place  
In old Nantucket town!

Some people has an appetite  
Fer city life an' wealth,  
An' some is alrays doctorin'  
An' chasin' after health,  
Till Boom! 'long comes a motor car  
An' flattens of 'em down;  
But there's a safer roostin' place  
In old Nantucket town.

Some folks go up to Boston  
Fer Culture, Art—an' Beans,  
Come back an' talk philosephy  
(An' Lord knows what it means!)  
I never wade beyond my depth,  
For I don't want to roostin',  
So just give me my roostin' place  
In old Nantucket town.

Some people's alrays whittlin'  
'Bout other folkses sins,  
An' 'tis with these self-righteous ones

That scandal oft begins;  
I calkerlate a hearty laugh  
Works better than a frown,  
An' makes a cheerful roostin' place  
In old Nantucket town.

If ever I be called aloft,  
An' grow some usef'ul wings,  
I'll oft come back to take a look  
At old familiar things,  
Then you may twang your golden harp  
An' you may wear your crown!  
But let me keep my roostin' place  
In old Nantucket town!

Mrs. Eleanor Morgan was introduced by the toast-master to speak on "The Women of Nantucket," an almost limitless subject, and her address was one of the best of the evening. She referred to the women of the past, the women of the present, and the women of the future, and she did it in such a way that everybody was sorry when she was through.

The fact that to the Rev. John Snyder fell the duty of making the closing address was agreeable to all, for this talented clergyman knows how to entertain a gathering of this kind with a wealth of ready wit and good humor, even at a late hour in the evening, when some addresses on like occasions become tiresome and "dry." He was asked to speak to the toast "An Off-islander," and although he wandered from his subject at times, no one seemed to care a bit, for he

kept the assembly convulsed with laughter from the moment he arose to speak until he sat down. A better selection could not have been made for the closing toast of the evening, and when the assembly broke up at 11.45 o'clock every face beamed with smiles and good-nature. In fact, it was one of the most enjoyable occasions, from opening to close, that Nantucket ever witnessed, and the ladies who arranged for the celebration are to be congratulated upon its unbounded success in every way.

JULY 24, 1909

#### Annual Meeting of Association to Feature Four Speakers.

The annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association will take place on Tuesday afternoon, July 25, at 3:00 p. m., at the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street. The annual reports of the officers will be given, followed by the annual election.

An innovation this year will be a panel of four speakers, instead of one speaker for the afternoon. Each of the four speakers will talk for approximately twelve minutes, so that the regular hour's period devoted to this highlight of the annual meeting will be well filled.

The four speakers who have accepted invitations to take part in this panel will talk on widely different topics but all of their subjects will concern Nantucket history.

Robert Waggaman, summer resident, who has been actively interested in maritime history over a period of years, will talk on the "First Painting of Nantucket Harbor and Town." Mr. Waggaman is the present owner of the little-known painting by Thomas Birch which authorities believe is the first artist's study of the town.

The second speaker will be Albert E. Marshall, summer resident of long standing, who has made a study of the collection of glass photographic negatives which the Association owns. Mr. Marshall has done considerable research in the field of early photography, and his talk will be of unusual interest.

The third speaker of the afternoon will be Richard Lederer, who has a summer home in Polpis. Mr. Lederer was one of the founders of the recent organization known as "The Autograph Collectors of America," and is now the President of this society. He has made an extensive study of collectors' items, as well as having an extensive collection of historical documents himself, among which is the only autograph of Myles Standish that is known aside from the one at Plymouth Court House.

Concluding the panel will be none other than Charles Sayle, well-known island ship-model maker and craftsman, who has just completed the rigging of the ship *India* for the Historical Association. This model will be on exhibition during the afternoon.

Friends as well as members of the "Historical" are cordially invited to attend this meeting. As the seating capacity of the rooms is somewhat limited, an early arrival is suggested to those planning to attend.

#### Nantucket Historical Society.

The Nantucket Historical society held its first annual meeting in its rooms on Fair street last Monday evening. There was a large attendance and the exercises were exceedingly interesting. Rev. Myron S. Dudley presided.

The reports of the various committees were read and accepted. The secretary's record shows a present membership of 231 and the financial condition of the society as shown by the treasurer's report, is very gratifying.

The chairman made interesting remarks, suggesting various lines of work which might be profitably taken up through sub-committees.

Officers for the ensuing year were then chosen, last years board being re-elected entire.

Several amendments to the constitution were suggested, but not having been embraced in the call for the meeting, could not be acted upon until later.

It was voted to hold quarterly meetings in future the first of the series to be called during centennial week. It was also voted that an admission fee of 15 cents for single ticket—10 for a dollar—be charged all visitors to the building other than members, the latter to be given complimentary tickets, not transferable.

A committee of three, consisting of Miss Anna B. Folger, Mr. Stanley E. Johnson and Miss Annie W. Bodfish, were appointed to ascertain the cost of publishing the books of the late George Howland Folger recently donated to the society. The remainder of the evening was devoted to literary exercises which comprised the following:

Interesting papers on Friends' discipline relative to marriage, with personal recollections, by Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck, who also related anecdotes of a Quaker lady named Elizabeth Black.

Reading of Josiah Quincy's reminiscences of Gov. Lincoln's visit to Nantucket by Miss Annie W. Bodfish.

The following poem, written for the occasion by Mr. Henry S. Wyer, was read by the Secretary, Miss Mary E. Starbuck.

#### A VISION OF THE FLEET.

Nantucket, January, 1895.

Awake, ye winds of legendry;  
Bring hither, as ye blow,  
The ships that sailed this ambient sea  
One hundred years ago!

Go forth, and fill their time-worn sails—  
Of many a storm the sport—  
And speed them with enchanted gales,  
To this, their ancient port.

Bring back the sailor-men that trod  
Their decks in days of yore,  
And let them tread their native sod  
With kith and kin once more!

E'en now may fancy's eye behold  
Their battered hulks forlorn  
Loom forth as bravely as of old  
Against the golden morn!

See where they rise, oh, wond'rous sight,  
Above the horizon verge  
Like sea-fowl, as in homeward flight  
They boom across the surge.

Now one by one they round the buoy  
Beyond the foaming bar,—  
Blow winds, and voice the sailor's joy  
Returning from afar.

But hark! upon the inward ear  
Their ringing voices fall.  
"All hands on deck! make cable clear!  
Ready, drop anchor all!"

"A loff there, all!—Furl every sail!  
Brail up there, aft and fore!  
Make ready at the starboard rail  
To pull away for shore!"

All now is haste and rivalry  
Aboard the brave old fleet,  
The boats put out, and presently  
Long-sundered hearts will meet.

They reach the wharf, the waiting crowd  
Press forward with eager zest;  
With anxious gaze, or greeting loud  
Their varying moods attest.

Here the proud matron greets her mate  
His long, long voyage o'er;  
And some with wistful faces wait  
For those that come no more.

See yonder men of dusky face  
That neither speak nor smile;  
Time was when sachems of their race  
Owned all this sea-girt isle!

Negro and swarthy Portuguese  
Of every shade and hue;  
Brave hardy sailor-men are these  
From many a whaler's crew.

As on the old familiar heath  
With rolling gait they tread,  
Enough for them—dry land beneath  
And blue sky over head.

See as they pass, each motley crew,  
At shop-doors lag awhile,  
With sea yarns old, yet ever new,  
They landsmen's ears beguile.

How it befell when 'Zekiel Worth  
Was swallowed by a whale,  
That monster quickly cast him forth  
And turned exceeding pale.

How Alick Green his spy-glass dropped  
While looking out for land,  
But nimbly down the back-stay popped  
And caught it in his hand.

How when the Nancy overhauled  
A Chinese pirate's crew,  
We flogged them heathen till they bawled,  
Then hung them by the queue.

As night comes on a motley throng  
To clothing-shops repair,  
Thence coming, after haggling long  
In loud-togs rich and rare.

And some there be, poor thirsty souls,  
Will potent draughts imbibe,  
Each greeted as he homeward rolls  
With many a thread-bare jibe.

All night from yonder snail-loft steals  
A gay unwonted strain,  
While to the fiddle's rhythmic squeals  
All dance with might and main!

Swift back and forth, and round about  
Brave lads with lasses whirl,  
Each laying out the longest route  
To pilot home his girl.

To many a wild and witching air  
The fiddler wields his bow,  
As jig and reel and hornpipe rare  
Alternate ebb and flow.

But lo! a deepening golden gleam  
Illumes the eastern sky,  
Disperse, ye creatures of a dream,  
Pale ghosts of days gone by.

\* \* \* \* \*  
My vision fades; vanished the fleet  
With all its phantom crew.  
On lonely bay and silent street  
No sign of life I view.

H. S. WYER.

Nantucket, June 3d, 1895.

Very interesting remarks were made by Mr. Thurston C. Swain of New York formerly of this town. Rev. Mr. Dudley announced the receipt of valuable papers complied by Rev. Timothy White first pastor of the North Congregational church, which closed the exercises.

June 20, 1895

#### The Historical Society.

THE Annual Exhibition of historical relics will be opened July 1st, and our townspeople are earnestly requested to notify the committee of any articles that they wish to contribute. We are especially desirous to obtain old portraits, daguerreotypes, silhouettes, or other pictures of historic. Also coats of arms, old books and documents, bearing on local history; lamps and lanterns. Those wishing to donate articles will please notify MISS M. E. STARBUCK, Secretary, or MISS S. E. BROCK.

1896

July 22, 1950



### Nantucket Historical Society.

The second meeting of the above society was held at the residence of Mrs. Elizabeth Starbuck Wednesday evening, 16th inst., when the following board of officers was elected:

Rev. Myron S. Dudley and Mr. Henry S. Wyer, vice-presidents; Miss Mary E. Starbuck, recording secretary; Miss Susie Starbuck, corresponding secretary; Mr. Alexander H. Seaverns, treasurer; Mrs. Charles B. Swain, Mrs. Henry U. Bennett, Mrs. George G. Fish, Miss Susie E. Brock, Rev. Edward C. Gardner, Mr. Wendell Macy and Mr. Arthur H. Gardner, councillors. It was greatly desired by the society that Mrs. Joseph S. Barney should accept the position of president, but her time is already so filled, that she felt she could not take upon herself additional duties. So it was voted to keep the office vacant for a while, and the meeting adjourned to 8 o'clock Monday evening, May 21, at Athenaeum hall.

At this meeting there was a largely increased attendance evidencing a growing interest in the society and its work. The time was devoted chiefly to considering the question of a president, but no definite action was taken. A committee which had been appointed at the last meeting to secure some suitable place in which to store donations which have begun to come in, reported that they had secured two rooms in Mr. A. H. Seaverns' house, Main street (the Reuben Joy homestead) for the summer. The meeting then adjourned subject to call.

A meeting of the councillors was held at the residence of Mr. A. H. Seaverns Tuesday evening at which sub-committees on finance, printing, supplies and exhibits were appointed, and various details incident to the work of the association discussed informally at some length. The association appears to be established on a permanent basis and growing in favor daily.

Anyone may become a member of the Association by paying one dollar a year. Sixty-six have already joined. By paying twenty-five dollars, one may become a life-member; and for a hundred dollars, a life-councillor.

It has been decided to print the Constitution, and up to the time of its going to press the names of all persons joining the society will be published in the list of original members.

### Custodian of Collections

At a meeting of the Council of the Nantucket Historical Association on Tuesday, it was voted to appoint Mrs. Walton H. Adams as Custodian of Collections.

Mrs. Adams, a Vice-President of the Association and co-chairman of the Fair Street Museum Committee, served as Curator of the Association over a period of fifteen years.

Her new position is an extension of the former office of Curator, with an enlarged scope, as she will now assume charge of the care and arrangement of the various collections. Through her years of experience, Mrs. Adams is fully qualified for this new and important position.

### The Historical Association.

A meeting of the council of the Nantucket Historical Association was held in the Friends' meeting house on Fair street, Monday at four o'clock to consider the question of adopting a seal. Several designs were presented including symbolism appropriate to the history of Nantucket island. They were drawn by Mr. Alexander H. Seaverns in line with the various suggestions of the council.

The suggestions and designs were so numerous and the opinions concerning them so various that it was decided to postpone a decision until an adjourned meeting of the council to be held this (Thursday) afternoon. When adopted the seal will be engraved at Boston and will appear on the constitution and roll of officers which is now being printed. The council also authorized the purchase of an antique spectacle case, once the property of Ruth Coffin, and bearing her initials. The Indian skull recently exhumed on the Cliff was on exhibition. It is possible it may become the property of the Association and most certainly should.

### Lectures on Nantucket History.

During the summer months, the Nantucket Historical Association will present a series of lectures by its President, Eduard A. Stackpole, each Wednesday and Monday afternoon, beginning Wednesday, July 9, at 3:00 p.m. Wednesdays the lectures will be held at the Whaling Museum and on Mondays they will be held at the Quaker Meeting House, on Fair St. There will be no increase in the regular Museum admission prices for these lectures.

The tentative program is as follows:

Wednesday, July 9; Monday July 14: "The Sea Kings of Nantucket."

Wednesday, July 16; Monday July 21: "A Quaker Kingdom."

Wednesday, July 23; Monday, July 28: "Whale Oil and Gunpowder."

Wednesday, July 30; Monday, August 4: "Mutiny at Midnight."

Wednesday, August 6; Monday, August 11: "Nantucket Ghosts."

Wednesday, August 13; Monday, August 18: "A Chapter in Maritime History."

Wednesday, August 20; Monday, August 25: "Melville and Nantucket."

Wednesday, August 27; Monday, September 8: "Nantucket Whalers as Discoverers and Explorers."

These lectures are presented so that a more general understanding of certain phases of Nantucket history may be made available to the public. The speaker has spent many years delving into island history. He is the author of "Smugglers' Luck," "Madagascar Jack," and other Nantucket books. Last year he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for research into whaling.

### Interview With Dr. Congdon On The Historical Association

To a large extent the future of Nantucket is dependent on the summer people who come here because of its natural beauty.

The wonderful bathing, the temperate climate and many other physical advantages form a large part of its attractions. But it is not only these that attract the people. Its wonderful history and its vast store of traditions beckon many visitors to the island each year.

The Nantucket Historical Association is dedicated to the idea of preserving Nantucket's history and traditions and to the careful preservation of places of historic interest. Much was done by the Association under the leadership of the late Mr. William F. Macy. Dr. Charles E. Congdon, who has taken an active part in the affairs of the Association, was selected to follow Mr. Macy as its president.

Feeling sure that everybody should be acquainted with these facts, and knowing of Dr. Congdon's great store of knowledge concerning them, I had the pleasure of an interview with him for the Student Issue of the Nantucket *Inquirer and Mirror*. I learned much and will endeavor to present these facts to the readers.

The Nantucket Historical Association was incorporated in 1895. The total membership is approximately 1,000 people. One-third are Nantucketers, while almost every state in the Union is represented by the members who form the other two thirds. Dr. Congdon believes that the Nantucket people should show a greater interest in this organization.

One of the first and most important things a stranger wishes to see, when visiting Nantucket in the summer time, is the Whaling Museum. Last summer over 6500 people paid the admission fee at this museum. This does not include the members of the Association who, upon paying \$1.00 a year, have the right to go into any building owned by the Historical Association free of charge. There are a great number of log book, kept originally by the captains of large whaling vessels, included in the archives of the Museum. The Whaling Museum was made possible through the generosity of Rev. Edward Sanderson, who turned the building over to the Society at cost, and presented it with much of its historical contents.

The library of the Whaling Museum is one of the best of its kind in the world because of its data on the South Seas and other facts pertaining to the whaling industry. At times there are eight to ten people in the library seeking to establish certain facts.

Many letters have been received by the Nantucket Historical Association, requesting a copy of the entry in the log of Capt. Mayhew Folger, in which he tells of the discovering of Pitcairn Island. Capt. Mayhew Folger was the captain of the sealing vessel "Topaz", and since the filming of the motion picture "Mutiny on the Bounty," interest has been aroused in the people of this country regarding the captain.

In Exeter, a sum of money was left by a person to further the interests of the library there and so a letter was sent here asking for a photostatic copy of the entry in the log describing the Pitcairn Island incident.

The Association also has in its possession letters written by Captain Folger from Valparaiso in 1809 to owners of the vessel, and also other letters written in 1820. There are also letters written in 1842 by his wife to friends, telling of the discovery as she had been told by her husband.

This summer there will be on display at the Fair street museum a letter written by a British Admiral during the Revolution, threatening to bombard Nantucket.

These facts were of great interest to me as was also the following information concerning other projects of the Association. The Oldest House, another building owned by the organization, was restored 6 or 7 years ago through the courtesy of Mr. Winthrop Coffin.

The "Old Mill" was originally a gift to the Association from Miss Caroline French. In the last year or so \$2000 has been spent in preserving the structure.

In Siasconset the Association owns the building used for the library. It is one of the oldest houses in Sconset, and was presented to the Association by Miss Annie Barker Folger.

There are many manuscripts, letters, and log books that are not in the possession of the society but instead are in the hands of the people of Nantucket. Such articles should be placed in the fire-proof museum on Fair street. If anyone is in doubt as to the value of any records they may have, they should ask the Council of the Association as to their value. Many such records have been destroyed in the spring house-cleaning and in cleaning out attics.

Dr. Sidney Mitchell, father of the present Sidney Mitchell, was the first president of this organization. William F. Barnard was second president. He was succeeded by Alexander Starbuck, noted Nantucket historian, who was in turn succeeded by Arthur Gardner, a journalist and historian. The late Wm. F. Macy did much to arouse the interest of the Nantucket people in the Nantucket Historical Association, and by his work in obtaining subscriptions of money the Association was able to purchase the Whaling Museum Building. At present there is a debt of about \$10,000.

The expense for the improvements and upkeep of their various buildings is large but Mr. Macy did much toward reducing the expense and increasing the income.

The office of president is now capably filled by Dr. Charles Congdon, who was kind enough to give me this interview.

Robert Bennett.

MARCH 21, 1936



# Nantucket Historical Association.

A pleasant and fitting prelude to the centennial was the informal meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association, held in the Athenaeum Hall on the afternoon of July 8th. The president, Dr. Mitchell, first addressed the meeting, —and by the way, won't some ingenious Nantucketer supply the want expressed by Dr. Mitchell for a gavel made of native scrub oak?

Dr. Mitchell's remarks were characteristically delightful, and at the close, he presented to the society a fine portrait of his cousin, Rev. Arthur Mitchell, a son of Nantucket, whose early death she deplores, but whose life she remembers with honor and affection.

Rev. M. S. Dudley then divulged to those present the secret—or part of it—the knowledge of whose existence has kept some of us lately in a quiver of expectation. Some generous person, whose name is not to be known, has assumed all the legal obligations of the Historical Society, and has also wisely provided against our sinking into a morass of Neatific satisfaction by attaching as a condition to this liberal gift, the moral obligation of raising a like sum for a fund, to be applied at the proper time to the acquisition of a certain property which is most desirable for the society to hold, but which at present is not obtainable.

Rev. Walter R. Gardner then put as a motion the following resolution, drawn up by Mr. W. H. McElroy, which, it is needless to say, was unanimously adopted:

The members of the Nantucket Historical Association desire to place on record their very grateful appreciation of the generosity of an unknown friend of their organization—a friend indeed. By his timely and liberal gift, he has relieved the society from debt, and since "Out of debt is out of danger," he has done much to ensure its permanent prosperity. We earnestly assure him that it shall be our aim to express our thanks for his benefaction in the best practical way—by rendering to the society whose interests he has so substantially advanced, good and faithful service. The Nantucket Historical Society, by linking the past of our historic island to its present and its future, by preserving and cherishing the things which keep vivid the memory of our ancestors, commends itself to the sympathetic support of all Nantucketers of genuine home feeling and public spirit. This consideration attests the value of the present, which we acknowledge with so much pride and pleasure.

Tendering our unknown benefactors renewed assurances of our gratitude, we direct that this minute be spread upon the records of our society, and that a copy thereof, attested by the President and Secretary, shall be transmitted to him as soon as he chooses to reveal himself.

After this came a well-arranged and most interesting sketch, written and read by Miss Helen B. W. Worth, of the life and labors of Timothy White, the first pastor of the North Congregational Church, some of whose records and correspondence have just come into the hands of the Nantucket Historical Association through the efforts of Mr. Dudley.

Dr. Mitchell then called upon Dr. West, of Dorchester, formerly of Nantucket, who responded with a stirring tribute to the men and women of old Nantucket, calling them a race of heroes, as indeed they were, and assuring his hearers that their valor still exists in their children when the emergency demands it.

Rev. Walter R. Gardner, of Nashota, Wis., followed Dr. West with a charmingly reminiscent talk, which he begun by saying that as he looked about he felt a bit timid lest from some one of his old teachers present he should hear the discouraging "Wrong!—next!—" "Why, Walter!" was whispered affectionately and deprecatingly, as if she had never used that appalling phrase. Dr. Gardner described graphically and touchingly the scenes of his boyhood, the home-coming and the outgoing of

the ships, with all the attendant incidents so dear now to the memories of the Nantucketers, until all the air was redolent of tarred ropes and lacquered work and pickled limes, and the eyes and ears were busy with sights and sounds not on the official centennial programme.

Some silver spoons marked "R. G. & C. G." were shown by Mr. Dudley, which had been dug up on land belonging to Eben W. Francis, and were supposed to have belonged to Richard Gardner's family.

Mr. Henry B. Worth, of New Bedford, with a ready familiarity with the subject, rapidly outlined the history of the Gardner family, naming the habitation of the elders of each generation, and from the locality and the circumstances attending the finding of these spoons, pronounced them to have been undoubtedly the property of Richard Gardner.

Mr. Moses Joy described a spoon found at Great Point, an apparent duplicate of which he saw and bought in the Norwegian department of the Paris Exposition. It seemed plausible to some imaginations that this Great Point spoon might once have reflected the light of the midnight sun, and might even have touched the lips of Leif Ericsson himself. Who knows? And who knows that it did not?

After the meeting had adjourned, many took the opportunity to greet friends of long ago. One gentleman spoke of seeing a school-mate for the first time for thirty years, and of his pleasure in talking with him once more. So the paths diverge and meet again, and what is true waits for that meeting.

The Centennial is over, and as we gather up the fragments which shall not be lost, let us speak of the suggestion made by Mr. McElroy in his most enjoyable speech at the centennial supper, that all this concentration of reminiscence, of pride, of tenderness and good will ought to bear fruit, "concrete fruit of lasting qualities" as he happily put it. There have been several suggestions as to the proper variety of this fruit. We want one that shall be sound

and of good flavor at the tri-centenary in 1959, 64 years hence, when the defunct and graceful maidens who ministered to our wants at the tea-party last Tuesday shall sit in our places at the banquet, in the vigorous (Nantucket) prime of life, and shall speak of us with that appreciation which shall be our due. Now what shall be done, friends, relatives and other guests? Think it over and tell us the results of your cogitations. Shall it be an observatory, first, to perpetuate the memory of Maria Mitchell, and secondly to aid and inspire those who choose to follow her pursuits; this observatory to include also an efficient means of protection for the town against fire. Shall we have a public library, or a town hall with a floor that echoes rather than quivers to her tread, and a stairway where two voters of different opinions may securely walk abreast? Or shall these two latter be combined under one imposing plan? Or will someone, knowing the needs and ambitions of the town, suggest something else which shall appeal to the taste and sympathy of everybody. Let us have all possible ideas.

It may be well to state that already a fund is started for a public library, so that those who want to mark this centennial year by a gift to this town, and who have no special interest in any existing organization, might do well to increase this fund for a library. As to the Historical Society, it is to be always with us, and we believe it is one of the merits of a historical society to be continually in need. May there be ever "those who love us."

July 13, 1895

## Historical Association.

At the Special meeting of the Historical Association, called for this evening, July 14, 8 o'clock, at the Goldenrod Club Rooms, formerly Wendell Hall, the topics for consideration are certain amendments to the constitution and by-laws. Most of these are of minor importance. But there is a proposition that should interest every member of the association, and it is hoped there will be a full attendance. This proposition is in regard to the selection of the nominating committee the duty of which is to present to the annual meeting a list of candidates for office. Hitherto this committee has been appointed by the council. The plan that a special committee has presented to the council, and this body recommends to the association, is to have the association elect at each annual meeting a nominating committee, whose duty it shall be to present to the next succeeding annual meeting a list of officers to be voted for at that meeting. This committee is to be elected by the meeting viva voce. Another plan presented to the council, and to be presented at this meeting, is to have both the nominating committee and the board of officers elected by the Australian system of balloting. This plan, in many respects, is the fairest, and gives the liberty and opportunity to the association. Any five members of the association, more or less, as that body may determine, can have one or more persons, up to the number of the full committee, put on the ballot for the nominating committee, and any ten members more or less as shall be fixed in the amendment, can have their desired candidates on the ballot for the council. This is all that can be desired and will give an opportunity for every sentiment and every interest to be represented on the council.

At the business meeting of the Association, to be held in the North Vestry, Wednesday morning, at 10 o'clock, besides the regular order of business such as the annual reports, the election of officers, and other routine matters, various papers will be presented of more or less interest. One on "Recollections as a Source of History;" another on the Correspondence of Colonial Governor Jonathan Belcher, Governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire from 1730 to 1741, with Hon. George Bunker, Senior Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the County of Nantucket, who held this position from 1729 to 1744. It is hoped that other papers of interest will be brought forward, and there will be opportunity for general discussion.

The public are cordially invited to attend this meeting as well as the Lecture of Mr. Barnard in the evening, at the Unitarian Church, at 8 o'clock. Mr. Barnard, is a trained observer of nature, and has invariably obtained his information by immediate personal investigation rather than from books and libraries. In preparing his lecture, "Nature Study 'Long Shore,'" Mr. Barnard not only drew upon his years of travel along our Atlantic coast, but spent six weeks in a minute and careful study of the shore line of Nantucket. Since the first of this year, he has also made a personal study of the floor of the old Paleozoic Sea that once covered the interior of the State of New York, having traveled over three thousand miles between New York City and Buffalo, along the shores of the long dead Laurentian Islands of the Highlands and the Adirondacks. The lecture is largely illustrated by pictures taken upon trips on old and new shores, including many pictures of Nantucket islands. It is safe to predict that all those who are able to attend this lecture will be both entertained and instructed. The lecture is free, and all are cordially invited to be present.

MORNING, JULY 14, 1900.

For The Inquirer and Mirror.

Mr. Editor:

The Nantucket Historical Association has received from Mr. Eastman Johnson a portrait of Robert Ratliff. On the back of the canvass is written "Robert Ratliff, born Feb. 23d, 1794. Went with Napoleon to St. Helena. Shipwrecked on the Island of Nantucket Dec. 20th, 1820, where he remained ever since, to date, Dec. 17, 1879. Eastman Johnson." It is a striking likeness of that old-time ship-rigger, whom many of us still remember, and somehow it brings to our minds as we look at it the "rig-loft" where his working days were spent with its (to a Nantucketer) delicious odor of rope-yarn, tar, and such like things. In a letter of acknowledgment to Mr. Johnson, we have tried to express to him our appreciation of the gift.

ELIZABETH C. BENNETT,  
Secretary Historical Association.

Dec. 15, 1900

## Notice.

THE rooms of the Nantucket Historical Association will be opened for the season Monday, June 18th. Hours daily (Sundays excepted), 10 a. m. to 12 m., 3 to 5 p. m. Admission 15 cents. jcl6

1900



### Admiral Byrd's Antarctic Flag in Nantucket Museum.

In the summer of 1926 the Nantucket Historical Society was able to add to its collection of historic relics the flag which was flown by the U. S. S. Chantier which carried Rear-Admiral Richard E. Byrd and his party on their successful expedition to the North Pole. The flag flown by the Chantier was secured by Capt. Harry Manter, of Nantucket, marine superintendent of the United States Shipping Board at New York city, and it is a relic which Nantucket thoroughly appreciates.

Last summer, when he came to Nantucket for his vacation, Captain Manter brought another interesting relic—the flag flown by the "City of New York" which carried Admiral Byrd and his party on their expedition to the South Pole. The American ensign flown by the "City of New York" is now the property of the Nantucket Society, along with that flown by the Chantier, and both flags will be preserved in the fire-proof building which shelters so many valuable historic relics. Nantucket has thus come into possession of the two flags which Admiral Byrd flew when he went to the two Poles, a fact that is of more than passing interest.

To substantiate the authenticity of the South Pole ensign, Captain Manter has forwarded to Mrs. Adams, the curator, a letter explaining how he came into possession of the historic flag and with it a photostat copy of a letter addressed by Admiral Byrd to Captain Brennan, who was master of the Chantier, and also a photostat copy of a letter sent to Captain Manter by Admiral Byrd, the two vouching for the authenticity of the flag.

Captain Manter has very kindly sent us copies of these letters, in order that our readers may know how Nantucket was so fortunate as to come into possession of the two flags which flew over Byrd's expeditions to the North and South Poles. The letters appear herewith:

Dec. 6, 1930

### Historical Association Announces Open House

The Nantucket Historical Association will keep open house at the Fair Street Museum and the Oldest House and Whaling Museum on Sunday September 25. No admission will be charged between 2 and 5 o'clock.

These exhibits will then be closed for the season except the Whaling Museum which will remain open until October 12.

Sept. 24, 1955

### Dr. And Mrs. William E. Gardner Observe 56th Wedding Anniversary

Dr. and Mrs. William E. Gardner of 33 Orange Street observed their 56th wedding anniversary Tuesday. Dr. Gardner, 82, who is a retired Episcopal minister and Nantucket author-historian, and Mrs. Gardner, 81, spent the day quietly at their home.

They were the recipients of floral gifts, cards and phone calls. Dr. Walter Boyd, a Summer resident here, sent a congratulatory cablegram to the couple from Switzerland. One congratulatory phone call came from Beaumont, Tex. from a woman at whose wedding Dr. Gardner officiated many years ago.

Mrs. Gardner, the former Mary Wentworth Tracy and Dr. Gardner were married in St. Paul's Episcopal Church here Sept. 14, 1898 by

his uncle, the Rev. Edward C. Gardner. It was the year Dr. Gardner entered the ministry and had his first parish in Swampscott, Mass.

He graduated from the Nantucket Coffin School and received his DD and PHD degrees from Brown University. During his 42 years active work in the ministry, he was for 15 years head of the Department of Education of the National Council of the Episcopal Church in New York City. Before his retirement to Nantucket in 1940 Dr. Gardner was assistant on the Green Foundation at Trinity Church, Boston, a post he had held also for 15 years.

Since his retirement he has written three Nantucket historical books each of which took about four years in research and writing. His first was Three Bricks and Three Brothers, concerning the Starbuck family. This was followed by the Coffin Saga on the Coffin family. His latest book, published last May, was The Clock That Talks and What It Tells, concerning the inventor of the astronomical clock, Walter Folger.

Dr. Gardner recently relinquished his post as chairman of the council of the Nantucket Historical Association to care for Mrs. Gardner who is in failing health.

### Historical Association Council Made Appointment.

George W. Jones has agreed to serve as a member of the Whaling Museum Committee of the Nantucket Historical Association. This news was announced at a meeting of the Council held April 19th. With grandparents and parents of Nantucket origin and a birthright Nantucketer himself keenly interested in Nantucket history, Mr. Jones' active participation in the management of the Whaling Museum is especially welcome at this time for the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Museum will be celebrated this year.

Preparations for the celebration have been started. The scrimshaw room to the left of the main entrance door is being re-decorated and a new lighting system is being installed.

To the right of the main entrance and directly behind the receptionist's desk, a whaling merchant's counting room will be set up. It will include the master's desk, ship records, charts, barometer, sea chests and boxes for ship's papers, ship models and other accessories. Even an old iron stove and a small safe will be in evidence. The Association will welcome the loan or gift of articles which can be used in this exhibit.

Plans were discussed, at the same meeting, for a series of lectures to be held this summer at the Friends Meeting House, similar to those which met with so much public favor last year. The subjects of the lectures and the speakers will be announced when the plans are completed. There also will be a special guest speaker for the annual meeting of the Association held in July.

Mrs. Walton H. Adams, President of the Association, will attend the spring meeting of the Bay State Historical League as a director-at-large of the League and as the representative of the Nantucket Historical Association. The spring meeting will be held at Springfield, Mass., May 7th and the Connecticut Valley Historical Society, a new member of the League, will act as host.

Apr. 23, 1955

MORNING, JUNE 11, 1955

### Opening of Exhibits Announced By Historical Association.

The Nantucket Historical Association has announced the formal opening of its various buildings and exhibits for the 1955 season.

The Oldest House, which opened June 4th, is presided over again by Miss Ethel C. Clark, who will wear as she did last year an early Island costume. Mrs. Lewis S. Edgerton is again serving as Chairman and hopes that a group of volunteer hostesses will be available again this year to assist Miss Clark in greeting visitors. The Oldest House will be open weekdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"1800 House" will open Monday, June 13th for the season and Mrs. Susan M. Cowden will welcome visitors again. Mrs. William Voorneveld, the new chairman, has not announced her plans for the season except that "1800 House" will continue to be shown, not as a museum, but as a home as it might have been lived in by some half a dozen generations during the time between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. "1800 House" will be open weekdays only 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Old Mill opens for visitors on June 13th. John E. Greene will serve as he has done for several years as the "miller" ready as always to explain the mystery of how the old wooden machinery and massive mill stones work. The one vane wrecked by hurricane Edna has been restored and Chairman Earl Ray announces all is in readiness to welcome visitors. The Old Mill will be open weekdays only 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

At the Historical Museum and Friends Meeting House on Fair street Mrs. Alma F. Backus will greet visitors again as in past years and Miss Alice Crocker will fill the position of Librarian. President Adams, who is still acting as Chairman, has rearranged the basement exhibits so that this year the old fire apparatus and equipment will take on a new look as a most interesting exhibit. The Historical Museum and the Friends Meeting House will open formally Monday, June 13th. It will be open to visitors weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The Whaling Museum, which opened for the season May 29th, is attracting many visitors. Its new exhibit, "a corner of a ship owner's counting room" is provoking favorable comment. The Museum is open weekdays and on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The date for the formal opening of the Old Jail, which it was hoped would be June 13th, has been postponed. An announcement will be made as soon as the date is set.

The admission fees for the exhibits will be the same as last year's except in the cases of the Old Mill and Old Jail, where admission will be free.

1929



## Nantucket Historical Association Given Large Donation

The regular meeting of the Council of the Nantucket Historical Association, with President George W. Jones presiding was held Tuesday afternoon, November 18, in the Council Room in the Friends Meeting House. The usual reports of the treasurer and committee chairmen were presented and accepted after which several items of special interest were reported upon as hereafter summarized.

The receipt of a generous and unsolicited donation was acknowledged with grateful appreciation when President Jones announced that the Nantucket Historical Trust, by vote of the trustees, had made a donation to the Association of \$1,000 to be used in setting up the Whaling Museum new exhibits, which is progressing satisfactorily. The laying of the cement flooring in the basement has been completed and the erection of the exhibit booths will be started shortly. William H. Tripp, Museum committeeman, is responsible for numerous donations of blocks, timbers, sisters hooks, irons, and tools all of which are old and used on whaleships. John W. Durant, New Bedford's only remaining sail maker still in business, is the donor of some of the most interesting old items. Arthur E. Egan, of Sconset, has donated weathered wood to be used for studs erecting the walls of the booths for which aged lumber is essential to create the proper atmosphere.

It was reported also that interested members have donated sufficient funds to pay for redecorating the Whaling Museum Library. This is the only room in the building not heretofore restored. Work is to be started at once.

The 300th Anniversary Committee has listed July 15-17 and August 12-14 as the dates for the Whaling Seminars. The Association is arranging for a series of six lectures to be held in the evenings on those dates in Sanderson Hall of the Whaling Museum which will lend considerable atmosphere to the lectures. The names of the lecturers and subjects will be announced later.

President Jones reports progress in his plans for the contest next summer between teams manning Nantucket's old fire fighting "hand tubs" as they were called. Harry Gordon will captain one team and Fire Chief Bartlett the other. Both are working to get the old fire engines in perfect working order.

Mr. Jones gave a report of the progress made with respect to obtaining final legal approval from the Commonwealth Authorities on the changes in the associations certificate of incorporation so as to broaden its stated purposes as approved at the last annual meeting of the association members. Mr. Jones and the Counsel of the Association, Miss Grace Henry, made the required appearance at a public hearing held in Boston. As there were no objections raised it is anticipated final approval will be obtained in the near future.

## Trust Gives \$1000 For Museum Exhibits

A generous and unsolicited donation of \$1000 by the Nantucket Historical Trust to the Nantucket Historical Association for use in advancing the Whaling Museum exhibits in the basement of that building was announced by Historical Association chairman George Jones, at a recent meeting of the Association's Council.

A cement flooring in the basement of the Whaling Museum has been completed, and the erection of the booths will shortly begin.

William H. Tripp, Museum committeeman famed for his familiarity with whaling lore, has donated blocks, timbers, sisters hooks, irons and tools, all formerly used on whaleships.

The only remaining sailmaker still in business, John W. Durant of New Bedford, has donated further whaling supplies. Arthur E. Egan of Sconset has donated weathered wood to be used for studs in erecting the walls of the booths. Aged lumber is a requisite for creating the desired atmosphere.

Redecorating the Whaling Museum Library, the only room in the building not previously restored, has been made possible by the donations of interested members. Work will begin at once.

Whaling seminars will be held July 15-17 and August 12-14, the 300th birthday committee has announced. The Association is arranging for a series of six lectures to be held in the evening on those dates in Sanderson Hall of the Whaling Museum. Names of the lectures and their topics will be announced later.

A contest next Summer between teams manning Nantucket's old fire fighting "hand tubs" will test the powers of Harry Gordon, captain of one team, and Fire Chief Irving Bartlett, captain of the other team. Both captains are working to restore the old fire engines to perfect working order.

Mr. Jones reported that final approval is expected in the near future to the Association's request to make changes in the Association's certificate of incorporation needed to broaden its stated purposes. The change was approved at the last annual meeting of the Association, and since then both Mr. Jones and Mrs. Grace Klingelfuss have made required appearances at a public hearing in Boston.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles P. Flanagan returned home recently from the mainland.

## Historical Group To Inherit Large Trust

Nantucket Historical Association stands to inherit a fortune eventually.

Proceeds of a trust fund, established in 1923 and now estimated in value at about \$250,000, will go to the Association under the provisions of a trust established by a descendant of one of the original Nantucket settlers, William H. Folger, a sea captain who had lived in a small town on the New Hampshire-Vermont border.

Sole surviving beneficiary of the trust at the present is an elderly daughter, Miss Margaret Folger, who resides in Portland, Me. Another daughter who had benefited under the trust died years ago. On the death of Miss Folger, the trust funds will go to the Historical Association.

Mr. Folger had designed it to go for a museum to house Association records.

Miss Folger and Gilbert M. Elliott, an investment broker of Portland, are co-trustees of the fund.

## Nantucket Exhibit In Texas Museum

Special to The Standard-Times

NANTUCKET, Feb. 17 — The Nantucket Historical Association, by invitation, is represented at a special exhibition of the Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, Texas, it was disclosed today by President George W. Jones.

The exhibition in the junior gallery of the museum was opened on Jan. 23 and will continue until March 20, under the direction of Mrs. James H. Chadwick of Houston.

The Nantucket exhibit depicts a small whaling village of the period between 1840-1860 complete with the bowsprit of a whaler made in one of the island shipyards.

Feb. 17, 1960

## Historical Association Exhibits At Houston Museum

Nantucket Historical Association, by invitation, is represented at the special exhibition of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas. This exhibition displayed in the Junior Gallery of the Museum opened January 23 and will continue until March 20. Mrs. James H. Chadwick, of Houston, is the Volunteer Chairman of the Exhibition, which depicts a small whaling village of the period 1840-1860, complete with the bowsprit of a whaler made in one of the local shipyards.

An attractive leaflet has been issued by the Museum for the Exhibition. It tells briefly the history of whaling and its decline. It then covers the development of the "clipper ships and how they faded out of existence as they could not compete with the newly developed steam driven ships." Thus it says: "By the 1870's a great era of the clipper ships and of the whaling industry had become a part of history. Each had left an important mark on American economy and culture."

An interesting schedule of activities was planned as listed in the pamphlet, namely:

January 23-24: Sea Chanteys—male chorus group directed by Richard R. Rosencranz.

January 30-31: Demonstration — "The Fine Art of Model Making," Albert Escamilla.

February 7: "Salty Tales of the Sea," Capt. Heloin A. Reeve.

February 13-14: Films — "Mystic Figureheads" and "Clipper Ships."

February 21: Demonstration — "Knot Tying," Harry A. Taylor.

February 28: Sea Chanteys (repeat).

March 6: Knot Tying (repeat).

March 13-14: Film "Moby Dick," narrated by Thomas Mitchell.

The equipment, loaned by the Nantucket Historical Association by request, included old navigation instruments, namely: a quadrant; a sextant; an octant; parallel rule, and a spyglass — all of which are well over 100 years old, and a well-used log line and reel complete one group.

Two particularly interesting charts were loaned. One was of the China Sea with hand recorded voyages with comments, day by day from 1847 through 1852. The other chart is labelled, "Show the favorite resort of the sperm and right whale." This is an old chart constructed and marked in color for each area from Maury's whale chart of the world dated 1853.

Pictures of the "Whale Craft Shops" installed last year in the basement of the Nantucket Historical Association Whaling Museum also were loaned to show the "land side" of whaling.

Lenders to the exhibition are reported as including in addition to Nantucket Historical Association: Marine Historical Association, Mystic, Conn.; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge; Free Public Library, New Bedford; Whaling Museum and Old Dartmouth Historical Society, New Bedford; Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas; Corinthian Yacht Club; Texas Nautical Company; Plymouth Cordage Company, and other local businesses in Houston.

The Nantucket Historical Association is very happy to cooperate with, and participate in, this special exhibition of the Whaling and Clipper Ship era. Houston, Texas, may seem to be a far cry from Whaling and Clipper ships, but the city's interest in shipping and its history is well evidenced by its extensive shipyards and the shipping canal direct to the sea.

## NOTICE.

MISS W. S. CHASE, of Nantucket, Mass., Chester St., for a slight remuneration for research, etc., will copy from the Genealogical and Historical Records of Nantucket from the year 1662 to the year 1891, for those desirous of becoming better acquainted with their ancestry.

Dec. 5, 1958

Feb. 19, 1960

Nov. 28, 1958



If you drive or walk, westward from town and climb the hillside where the Folger-Franklin Memorial Seat and Boulder were erected last summer, you will find a superb place to watch the sunset spread over the sky above. If the sun is going down as a red fiery ball, there will be reflections of crimson in the windows all along the town, giving an effect of a great conflagration. This lasts but a short while before the afterglow spreads over whatever clouds may be in the east, and around the horizon. Before you leave, notice the skyline of Nantucket-town, which is silhouetted in miniature from this viewpoint like a scene on a post card which says, "Wish you were here."

Take a look at the view from the memorial, however, and see the outline of Nantucket from the west. Anyone can see that the church spires are the most outstanding shapes along the low mound which is town. Commencing from the north we see the "kitty-ears" of the Congregational Church. It is appropriate that this should be the first consideration, as the vestry, which is at the rear of the church, is the oldest actual religious edifice on the island. It was erected on a hillside near No Bottom Pond, between Duke Street and West Chester Street, when these two were the principal thoroughfares of the town.

Just beyond the end of the dirt road of West Chester Street is a rise of ground to the left, and this is the purported location of the old vestry. The site of the North Vestry was erroneously located near the Forefather's Burial Ground on a tablet there, but the truth is that the first church which was built there has long since ceased to exist. The earliest existing edifice is the old north vestry, built 1711, and it came from the West Chester Street site.

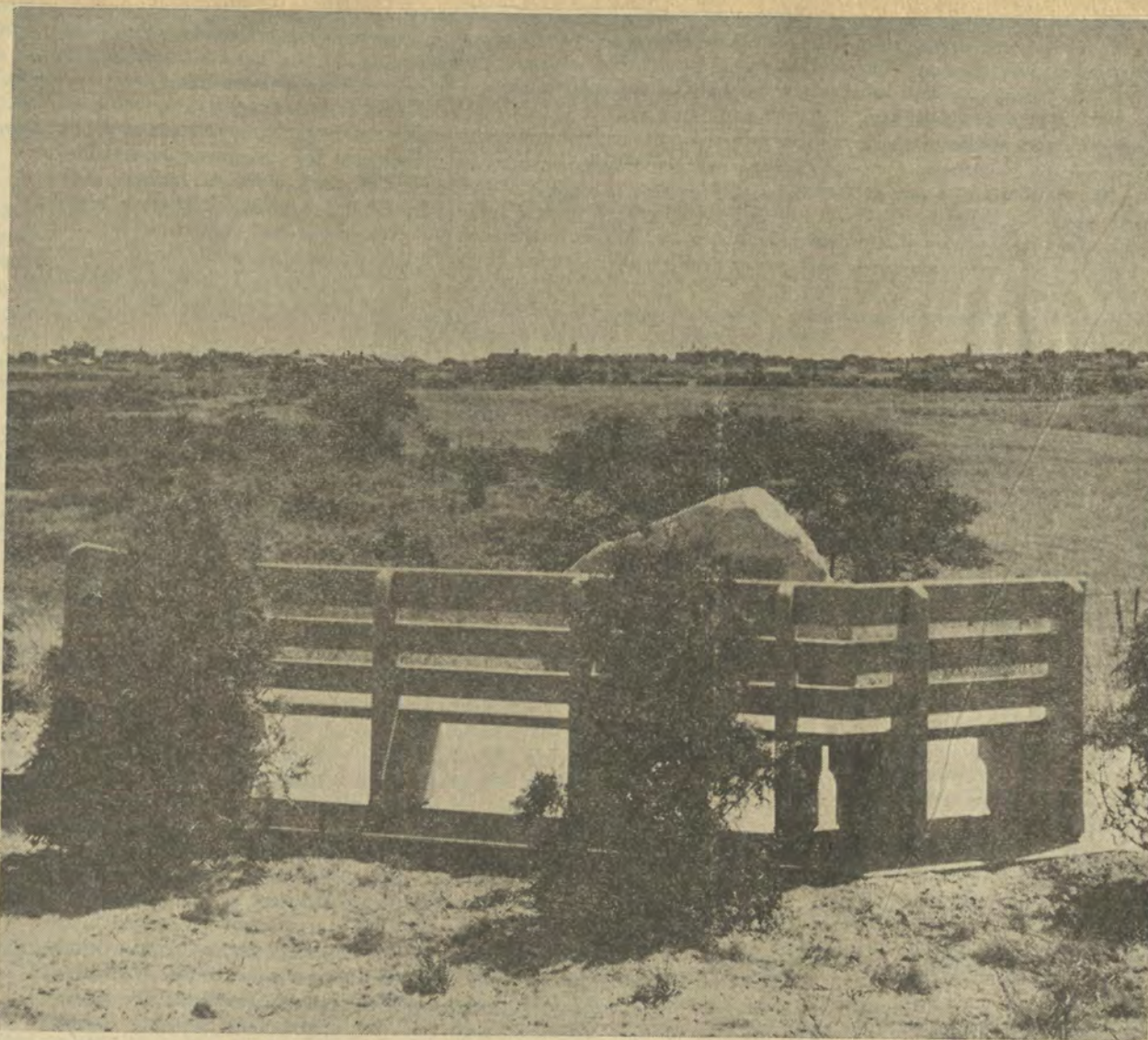
This is logical, in view of the fact that the town houses at the time were located all about "No Bottom," which pond is visible only from this same rise of ground today — Duke Street having long since foundered in undergrowth in many places.

The Old North Cemetery (1709) was located not too far from this hill, so it is reasonable to suppose the North Vestry was not too far away. When the preponderance of dwellings began to cluster about the Wesko section of town, rather than out on the Sherburne Bluffs, it was only natural that the building should have been re-erected within the new town in 1765, and on a hill which overlooked the Lily Pond and the sea. It made a good vantage point for a fire watch and was so used for many years after 1787.

By 1795 a tower with a bell was built on the front of the old North Vestry. At this time there were still three wigwams standing in Squam, which helps to give a picture of how really old this establishment is.

The first year of the 19th century saw a thousand pound bell hung in this tower, and the town custom of bellringing at certain times of the day came into existence—at sunrise, noon, and curfew at nine, as well as for emergencies. It was not until 1834 that the present large church building, known as the Congregational Meeting House was erected, being dedicated on November 6th.

This building is very pretty with its white tower rising above a hilly lawn. There is a functional hall, called Bennett Hall, adjacent. It was named for Fred Bennett, one of the many fine ministers who have been a credit to the whole town. This is one of the largest buildings on the island, and is in a fine state of preservation, having been renovated and repainted



A view of the town from the Folger-Franklin Memorial Seat and Boulder. The boulder, bearing a large bronze tablet, is a symbol of the stalwart character of Peter and Mary Folger, and the seat is an invitation to meditate on their gift to America.

many times. The simplicity of its present white is most appropriate, and rises 109 feet above the sidewalk. The rounded dome glinting in the sunlight, the windows below (where once the firewatch raised his lanterns throughout a century of tedium), the shuttered section which houses the famous Portuguese bell, and the square section holding the very useful town clock all combine to make a picture which many an artist has painted. Many a photographer, too, has tried to capture this picture in and around the ubiquitous and annoying telephone and electric light wires, all of which, throughout the center of this historic town, should be buried underground!

As the eye travels along this hillside, known as Academy Hill, a large brick building meets your gaze. This brave structure was built as a High School and a Grammar School for the north end of the town. There is a wonderful view from the top story as you look down over the harbor. The fate of this structure is now in some doubt. It presently serves for the Junior High School of the town and accommodates the North Elementary School youngsters. There is some question whether it will become the general grammar school for the whole town, the location of the Town offices, or be razed. It is quite an item on the horizon of the town, in more ways than one!

Further along, past many a sturdy gray roof, the next tower to be seen is topped by the golden dome of the Unitarian Church, a beloved sight to all travelers, as the steamboat makes its way to the dock round Brant Point. The Unitarian Society was formed in 1809, and the church building was dedicated on November 9th of that year. Last November saw a 150th celebration in the vestry.

It was not until 1830 that the bell tower was erected at the front of the church. This structure is sep-

arate from the rest of the church, and rises 109 feet above the sidewalk. The rounded dome glinting in the sunlight, the windows below (where once the firewatch raised his lanterns throughout a century of tedium), the shuttered section which houses the famous Portuguese bell, and the square section holding the very useful town clock all combine to make a picture which many an artist has painted. Many a photographer, too, has tried to capture this picture in and around the ubiquitous and annoying telephone and electric light wires, all of which, throughout the center of this historic town, should be buried underground!

The story of the Portuguese bell bears repeating, as it has a romantic legend. It was near the start of the War of 1812 that Captain Clasby purchased this bell at a foundry in Portugal, where a set of bells was being struck for a Catholic monastery. Its tone is a perfect "B" as Captain Cary (on whose ship the bell was transported to the island) averred, he having "perfect pitch." It is easy to picture these two Nantucket captains "shopping" for a bell to be used to call posterity through the ages for all things of importance. They went all over the yard of the bell foundry, where levers would raise each bell from the ground so it might be tested, until Captain Cary, whose singing voice was well-loved in the congregation, found just the right one

for Nantucket and the church with the Golden Dome.

It is said that while they were thus occupied in Lisbon word came that Great Britain was once more at war with the new country across the sea. Captain Cary "spoke" a sloop of war that had been at sea for some time on the way home. He took great care not to apprise the British captain of the state of war but ran along home in safety.

The bell was stored in Captain Cary's cellar until 1815 at which time it was purchased, about \$500 being paid for it, and was hung by the church members and others who wished to have a part in this new departure. So beautiful was the tone that the Old South Church of Boston offered to buy this bell, theirs having broken and they needed a new bell to go with their fine clock. The Nantucketers replied that they "had a fine bell and how much would the Bostonians sell their clock for?" The bell weighs 1,575 pounds and the Boston gentleman offered \$1 a pound for it. As it was not for sale at any price, they "sent to Lisbon and procured a remarkably good one" from the same foundry.

The inscription around the bell is in the original Portuguese language and is translated, "To the Good Jesus of the mountains the devotees of Lisbon direct their prayers, offering Him, one complete set of six bells to call the people and adore him in his sanc-

over



tuary." The foundry people replaced our bell, needless to say.

When next you hear the bell ring, think of those doughty sea captains strolling through the bell foundry, the encounter on the high sea, and the good fortune of circumstance that Captain Cary's ear was properly "tuned."

From the Folger-Franklin Seat and Memorial Boulder (which was erected in memory of the forebears of the illustrious patriot Benjamin Franklin, whose family homestead was in this field) the next peak to break the rounded hillside on which Nantucket stands, is the Baptist Church tower which thrusts up needlepointed contrast to the other squat towers of the town. It is painted white and has an interesting terraced effect as it rises square block above block up to the spire which cuts the sky. The Baptists formed in 1839 and their cornerstone at Summer Street was laid the following year. This was at a time of growth in many of the religious sects.

The Episcopalians built Trinity Episcopal on Broad Street that year. Also, the Methodists, who had erected their original edifice in 1822-23, changed the appearance of their church considerably in 1840 when they altered the pitch of their roof from a four-sided to a peak and added the gigantic Grecian pillars which we associate with that building today. Having no steeples, the Methodist, Episcopal, and Catholic Churches do not figure in the skyline of Nantucket but they are very much a part of the underlying structure of the town and are not to be forgotten in the discussion of the outstanding religious structures here.

It is only in the summer that there are meetings of the Christian Scientists and the Friends. The latter stern sect was the basis of the character development of many of the old-time builders of Nantucket's fame and fortune. One of the first Quaker meetings was located at the corner of Quaker Lane and Main Street where the Quaker burial ground now shrouds the historic group who shaped the destiny of the island.

From this memorial bench in winter time there is some difficulty in ascertaining the location of the Old Mill, that last reminder of the Mill Hills, called Popsquatchet Hills by the Indians, where once several mills showed their vanes. Dressed in sails which flew to the breezes of the sea as they ground the meal to feed the burgeoning populace, at that time dependent on island produce for groceries, it must have been a pretty sight. It is a real sign of spring when the Historical Society, which has been instrumental in the preservation of this old landmark, sees fit to put the vanes back on the mill, thus completing the picture which meets the eye of the summer visitor who will sit out at the Folger Memorial next season and reminisce upon these lines.

Feb. 12, 1960



FRIDAY, JULY 29, 1960

## Island Interviews Recorded For Posterity

Introduced by the familiar sound of steamboat whistles off Brant Point and concluded with the raucous cry of gulls hovering over Old North Wharf, a series of tape recorded interviews with persons intimately acquainted with the Little Gray Lady's past featured the annual meeting of the Nantucket Historical Association.

Subjects covered in the hour-long series of interviews, culled from some 32 individual reels, ranged from whaling to the former artists' colony in Sconset and embraced such diversified items as lobstering off Tuckernuck, the famous Lisbon Bell and the Nantucket Central Railroad.

Henry Coffin Carlisle, who remarked that he had begun making the recordings as a hobby but found that it became a full-time occupation, explained that the interviews had been recorded during the past three years and that in each instance they represented two-and-one-half minute excerpts from 32-minute individual reels.

He added that his interest in the project had been spurred by the realization that, within a few years, some of the sounds and stories familiar to the present generation might well be lost forever unless steps were taken to preserve

them for posterity and that transcribed copies of all of the original interviews have been presented to the Historical Association.

Although consensus has it that whaling on Nantucket ended when the Oak sailed in 1869, Marcus Ramsdell recalled that residents of Tuckernuck were still taking whales off shore as late as the 1890s and had actually gone to New Bedford to purchase whaleboats and trypots.

Farming, fishing and wrecking were the principal occupations of the inhabitants of Tuckernuck, he said, and noted that sheep became so numerous that they destroyed the farm crops and became fair game for anyone. Lobstering was also a major venture, he pointed out.

However, he added, one man had more than 200 pots off Tuckernuck and his catch became so large that there was no market for it on Nantucket and he had to row over to Oak Bluffs to sell it. Such footnotes to history as this held the audience entranced throughout the meeting.

Jay Gibbs, whose forebears tolled the Lisbon bell for generations, related that the 52 strokes which the Island's official clock peals out three times daily have no espec-

ial significance, other than that the number of strokes corresponds to the number which could be tolled in a three-minute interval. His words were accented by the recorded sound of the bell itself.

Old Sconset and Old Nantucket received their just share of attention as Agnes Everett gave her recollections of Captain Baxter's house and of the parties held in the old village railroad station while Chester Pease and Patsy Robertson reminisced about George E. Moore's meat auctions on Main Street, near the site of the present Emporium.

Arthur McCleave cited some of his experiences in lobstering off Sankaty and Great Point and the voice of the late Will Tripp, perhaps the nation's foremost authority on whaling, explained that the huge mammals do not actually spout water or any other fluid, as is commonly believed.

"A whale, like any other mammal, would drown if it had water in its lungs," he noted. "What the whale actually blows is hot air. He has to hold his breath while under water and his body temperature, about 105 degrees, is considerably warmer than the water temperature."

"When the whale surfaces," he continued, "he has to release his breath and, similar to the breath

of a human being on a cold day, it vaporizes and appears as a cloud. Actually," he noted, "a good sized whale can stay under water for about an hour without surfacing and the length of time it can remain submerged is a good indication of its size."

"Both Moors End and the Ocean House, the first two brick houses on Nantucket, were built by the same man, Jared Coffin," Dr. Will Gardner noted in mentioning a little known facet of Island history and added that the Great Fire of 1846 started in a store located approximately where the Nantucket Spa now stands.

The familiar sounds of former Court Officer Marcus Ramsdell calling a session to order and Margaret Fawcett's reminiscences of the days when DeWolf Hopper, celebrated for his rendition of Casey At The Bat, frequented the actors' colony at Sconset preceded Archie Cartwright's comments concerning his whaling days aboard the Sunbeam.

Details of the tragic sinking of the Nantucket Lightship by the S S Olympic in 1934 were related by Mr. Tripp, who recalled that only four of the 11 men on the crew of the lightship were saved as it was cut in two by the larger vessel during a dense fog.

A violent Northeaster which opened up the Haulover and divid-

ed Nantucket into two parts back in 1896 was discussed by George Mackay, now president of the Pacific Club, and three fishermen and the voice of the late Joe King recounted the discovery of a huge quahaug bed off the Jetties in 1913.

Dory fishing off Sconset was the subject of an interview with the aforementioned Captain McCleave while Walter Barrett, Ellison Pease and Elwyn Francis discussed scalloping in Nantucket waters after their remarks had been prefaced by the sound of a bell buoy outside the harbor.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner related how more than 100 persons have made contributions to her extensive series of scrapbooks and files covering Island history and Mrs. Harry Walling narrated experiences of her early years of residence on Old North Wharf. The sound of a locomotive bell wrote a fitting climax to a gam on the old Nantucket Central Railroad.

Interspersed with the nostalgic stories told by the persons interviewed, Mr. Carlisle's tape recorder conjured up such appropriate sounds as the clatter of horses hooves on cobblestoned Old Main Street and the cry of the town crier summoning residents and vacationists to the Fete which marked Nantucket's 300th birthday.

## Nantucket Historical Association Receives \$1,000 Donation

A very welcome donation of \$1,000 has been received by the Nantucket Historical Association for the restoration of the Gardner Street Hose House. This donation, added to those previously made, will pay for most if not all, of the work to be done.

Last week work was started and, together with other scheduled Association work, will be carried on during the winter for completion before the next seasonal opening.

It is now planned to lay a wooden flooring of "old wide boards" properly supported by concrete blocks with ample air space between the ground and the flooring. Eliminating the suggested cement flooring will reduce the cost of restoration and, above all, will provide a far more authentic appearance, as that of the original wood flooring.

Restoration and repairs are to be carried out during the winter at various other buildings of the Association, the most important and costly being on the Old Mill. It will include also work at 1800 House, the Oldest House and the Whaling Museum.

At the Old Mill, careful examination of the main shaft supporting the arms confirms that the wood has now weathered and rotted beyond repair, leaving the bearing arms loose. The arms will be removed promptly to protect them from possible damage by being blown down by high winds combined with icing during the winter. President George Jones announced to the Council that a member of the Association who owns a large "stand of timber" has offered an oak tree which could be cut and cured and be large enough to make two shafts. As

the shafts have to be replaced at regular intervals and oak timber of sufficient size and cut is not readily available, this offer is especially fortunate for it would provide a shaft in reserve. Estimates of the cost of cutting the tree, curing the wood, and transporting the two shafts to the Island are being secured. It is hoped that this generous offer will reduce the cost of replacing the shaft.

The 1800 House has been painstakingly inspected for needed repairs accumulated since it was first acquired and restored in 1952. A detail report was made to the Council of the Association by Mrs. Joseph King, chairman of the 1800 House committee. Work approved will include replacing specified sash, window frames, sills and reshingling in part and some repainting.

Repairs at the Oldest House will be confined to the shed, in back of the main building, which houses the rest room facilities, and storage space. Cement block pillars will be installed together with new sills which will save further deterioration.

The Whaling Museum is reported in good physical condition except for the inside walls of the scrimshaw room. These walls made of old brick offer a real decorating problem for atmospheric moisture condenses on the cold brick surface which repeatedly ruins any and all types of paint and preservative finish applied. This condition exists almost year round. By experimentation the answer seems to be found in covering the wall with a thin plywood with a half inch air space separating the wood from the brick. This work will be completed during the winter so that the job, including painting, will be finished before the usual spring rush of work occurs.

Reports for work to be done at the Historical Museum on Fair Street and the Old Jail have not been made as yet. It is not anticipated, however, that any extensive work will have to be done at either location.

The carrying out of the work thus planned is evidence of the present policy of the Association to keep its buildings and exhibits in good order.

Over the years it has been proven that a program providing for current repairs, timely replacements and restoration not only reduces the cost of maintenance but adds to the public appearance of the buildings, an added attraction to Island visitors.

Oct. 28, 1960



## Nantucket Historical Association Announces Recent Donations

One year and eight months' work is represented in a beautiful quilt presented recently to the Nantucket Historical Association. The quilt, showing 24 Nantucket sketches and 30 sketches of Nantucket flora was designed, appliquéd and quilted by Miss Frances Fenton, a former summer resident, of Cleveland Heights, Ohio. It was purchased by friends of Miss Fenton and presented by them to the Association.

While words cannot possibly describe the beauty of the quilt and the workmanship involved, a brief description will give some idea of its unusual character and historical value. In size it more than covers a large double bed. The calico sketches, all in appropriate colors, on a solid white background arranged in rows present the following — 1st row — Pacific Bank, 1918; Whaling Schooner "Deer"; Baptist Church, 1840.

Second row — Atheneum, 1847; Unitarian Church, 1809; Great Point Light, 1784; Pacific Club, 1772.

Third row — 28 Orange Street, 1755; Maria Mitchell discovering comet; Old Mill, 1746; Brant Point Light.

Fourth row — Sheep; Thomas Mayhew Document, July 2, 1659, sale of island for 30 pounds and two beaver hats; Whaling Museum, 1847; Coffin House, Oldest House, 1686.

Fifth row — Indian; Sankaty Head Light, 1850; Coleman House, 1772; Nantucket Costume and Lightship Basket.

Sixth row—Bluejay; Coffin School; Tony Sarg's Town Crier; Fish House.

In between these rows and around the border are found floral sketches which include: Heaven Blue Morning Glory; Sumac; Ragged Sailor; Cranberry; Morning Glory; Milkweed; Thistle; Hawthorne; Trailing Arbutus (Mayflower); Pinks; Pokeberry; Bayberry; Beach Pea; Ivy; Trumpet Vine; Golden Rod; Top of Hollyhock; Blackeyed Susan; Blueberry; New England Aster; Wisteria; Bittersweet; Lilac; Wild Rose; Wild Grape; Morning Glory; Gentian; Mallow; Beach Plum; Morning Glory.

The Association is most fortunate to be able to exhibit this unusual piece of work as an outstanding example of handicraft. The interest of friends in the Association and their generosity in purchasing and presenting the quilt to the Association was gratefully acknowledged by the Council of the Association in resolutions passed at a recent meeting.

Mrs. E. A. Gray, of Arlington Heights, Mass., a recent visitor at the Whaling Museum, has become an interested and generous donor to the Museum, thanks to the attention given to her by Librarian Ellen Chace. She is a granddaughter of Captain William Cash who was Master of the Islander, when he brought back the "Big Jaw" now one of the outstanding exhibits of Sanderson Hall. Mrs. Gray has sent to the Museum the original of a letter from P. T. Barnum, the great circus showman, writ-

ten to her grandfather in an effort to obtain the "Big Jaw" for his "Free Museum" in New York City. This letter, typewritten on paper having a picture of his Museum, reads as follows:

"Dear Sir:

"When I was at Nantucket recently I called to see your whale's jaw. It is a stunner and I was sorry I could not see the men who captured it. I hope you will carefully read the enclosed circular. Perhaps you may then feel that if the jaw was properly placed in my museum and its story and your name legibly inscribed on it, more of your friends (as well as the great public) would see it, than they would on your own premises. Perhaps also these considerations would induce you to hand your name down to a grateful posterity by being identified as the DONOR of this Jaw to the Free Museum in New York. However, if you don't see it in that light, will you please inform me whether you will sell it to be placed in my Museum and if so, for what price, and oblige.

Truly yours,

"P. T. Barnum.

Fortunately for the Whaling Museum and Nantucket, Captain Cash did not see fit to accept P. T. Barnum's offer. A copy of this letter, now attached to the "Big Jaw" has created interesting comments. Other donations made by Mrs. Gray include, Journal of Ship Pacific, Capt. George Tabor, 1870-1873, kept by William Murray Cash, 4th Mate, and part of a journal kept by him for the "Contest" Captain James L. Chapman, 1868-1870. It is interesting to note that he was born at Hilo, Hawaii, August 20, 1851, so he must have been only 17 years old when he signed on for the voyage on the "Contest."

Another unusual donation is a resumé of William Murray Cash's life as an infant on board Ship Columbia kept by his mother, wife of Capt. William Cash. It is an interesting story written by a "Fond Mamma."

Mrs. Gray also donated some beautiful material for a voluminous old fashioned petticoat. The material was made by natives of the South Sea Islands and was brought back by Captain William Cash, on the Ship Islander.

Edgar L. McCormick, of Kent, Ohio, and an active member of the Association has spent odd moments for the past two years studying the Nantucket migration of Portage County, Ohio. His research has turned up many interesting items including the location and ownership of numerous Nantucket ship logs, all of which he has reported in detail to the Association. This valuable information is now recorded in the Whaling Museum Library files. He has presented to the Museum an autographed copy of a book entitled, "Life on a Whaler," edited by him and Edward G. McGehee. This is a valuable addition and will be especially useful to students of whaling.

The log of the Sea Breeze, Capt. George Newell, on a voyage from

Boston to San Francisco and on to Honolulu and Canton and return to Boston with descriptive passages on San Francisco and Honolulu is the subject matter of a book, "Two Brothers," edited by Robert R. Newell, greatgrandson of Captain Newell. A copy of this book has been presented to the Whaling Museum by Mr. Newell who lives in Norwalk, Conn.

"Shantymen and Shantyboys," is the title of a beautiful book and rich in material of songs and ditties of the sea, collected and compiled by William Main Doerflinger, of Convent, N. J. An autographed copy has been presented by the author to the Whaling Museum.

"Midship, 1961," is the title of the Annual publication of the United States Merchant Marine Academy. "Yankee Whaling," with illustrations, is the theme of this edition for which Cadet Ensign Jere G. Price, editor in chief, did the research to whom the Whaling Museum is indebted for a copy of this excellent publication.



Photo by Universal Photo Shop  
George Jones, President of the Nantucket Historical Association, receives the first dial phone used on Nantucket from District Manager Thomas Moore. The phone has been donated to the Historical Association.



### Silver Life Saving Medal Loaned to Museum

The Nantucket Historical Association has announced that Mrs. Kenneth N. Pease has lent to the Whaling Museum for exhibition the silver medal awarded by the U.S. Government to her father, George J. Flood, for heroic services rendered as a crew member of the Coskata Life Saving Station, in rescuing the crew of the British Schooner Kirkham.

This phenomenal rescue is briefly but well described as follows in "Wrecks Around Nantucket," published by The Inquirer and Mirror:

"1892, January 20th, three-masted schooner, 'H. P. Kirkham,' McCloud of Liverpool, N. S., bound from Halifax to New York with a cargo of dry and pickled fish, struck on Rose and Crown Shoal in the evening and sank. The seas broke over her immediately, compelling the crew to take to the rigging. At daybreak the next morning she was sighted from Sankaty lighthouse by Keeper Remsen, who telephoned Coskata life-saving station. The crew started immediately with their small life-boat on wheels, hauling her across the beach and launching her on the outside of Great Point. They reached the vessel about 11 o'clock and with great difficulty took off her crew of seven men from the rigging, where they had been exposed for fifteen hours, suffering intensely from cold and frequently drenched by the breaking waves. Then commenced a long, hard struggle for life. The little boat, overloaded with the double crew, took in water frequently, necessitating constant bailing to keep her afloat. Siasconset, the nearest land, was ten miles to windward. The wind and sea increased and the dashing spray froze on the men as they struggled at the oars. Hour after hour they rowed, without perceptibly nearing the shore. In less than an hour after leaving the vessel, she had gone to pieces. Three hours later and again during the night they were obliged to anchor to prevent being carried to sea. Darkness settled upon them and all through the night they toiled on, guided by the flashes from Sankaty's beacon. Meantime they were given up for lost by anxious friends on shore, but when day dawned the little boat was descried in the offing, still gallantly buffeting the fierce wind and sea, and at 10 o'clock in the forenoon they landed on Sconset beach. For twenty-six hours since leaving their station they had battled with wind and sea without nourishment and under circumstances of extreme peril. In recognition of their efforts the U.S. Government awarded to Keeper Chase a gold medal and to each of the crew a silver medal, the presentation, with appropriate public exercises, taking place in the Unitarian Church in January, 1893. Ere the arrival of the medals, however, one of the number, Surfman Perkins, had succumbed to a fatal attack of illness, brought on by the severe exposure."

These medals, awarded by the Treasury Department, United States Life Saving Services under the act of Congress dated June 20th, 1874, were presented to the Coskata crew members by an officer of the Coast Guard at the special exercises in January 1893 which was largely attended. In affixing the medal Lieut. Dernult said to Surfman Flood, "Though but a boy in years and strength, gave all that any man could give, his best, and if his oar was not pulled as strongly as a larger man could have done, it never missed its stroke." Inscribed on the back of the medal is the following notation:

"To George J. Flood, Surfman, Coskata Life Saving Station, District 2, Wreck of British Schooner Kirkham, January 21, 1892. In Testimony of Heroic Deeds in Saving Life From The Depths of The Sea."

This medal with suitable explanatory story is being placed on exhibition at the Whaling Museum. A very complete story of the wreck, rescue, and award ceremony is available for reference in the Whaling Museum Library in volume one of "Nantucket Heroes of the Sea" in the memorial to Walter Nelson Chase, Keeper of the Coskata Station. The gold medal presented to Keeper Chase is on exhibition at the Historic Museum on Fair Street.

The Whaling Museum also has received two very welcome gifts, one from Marcus L. Ramsdell and the other from Earl S. Ray. Mr. Ramsdell's donation is an old and well-worn grapnel iron which has been placed in the Ship Smith's Shop in the basement. Mr. Ray's donation is a ship Chandler's Day Book found in an attic of an old Nantucket home. The actual owner is not definitely identified as yet but it is apparent that the owner was one of the Gardner family. This donation has been placed in the Library.

Nine Nantucket organizations and individuals are among the principal beneficiaries of the will of the late Miss Florence E. Mitchell of Medford, a long-time Summer resident of Sconset whose estate is valued at more than \$200,000, the Nantucket Town Crier learned today in an exclusive story.

Philip C. Murray, president of the Coffin School Association, revealed that Alcon Chadwick, president of the Nantucket Institution for Savings, who is also a member of the Association and one of the trustees of the Coffin School, has received a \$15,000 check from the Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Co., executor of Miss Mitchell's estate.

In her will, Miss Mitchell stipulated that one-tenth of the residue of her estate, after disposition of other property and bequests, be given to the Coffin School Association to be added to its endowment fund. The \$15,000 check sent to the Association by the Boston banking firm represents one-tenth of the estate's residue.

However, Mr. Murray, who like

### Nantucket Organizations Benefit Under \$200,000 Estate Of Florence E. Mitchell

Mr. Chadwick was delighted by the windfall, said that he anticipates that the full amount realized by the school may amount to an additional \$1000 or \$2000. Mr. Murray said that the income from the money will be used for scholarships.

Other Island organizations which benefit by Miss Mitchell's will are the Nantucket Cottage Hospital, the Maria Mitchell Association and the Old People's Home, each of which receive a two-tenths share, or about \$30,000, the Nantucket Historical Association and the Nantucket Atheneum, each of which receive a one-tenth share, or about \$15,000.

In each of the foregoing instances, the bequest is to be held by the beneficiary as a permanent fund with the income only to be used for the general purposes of the organization or as otherwise stipulated by terms of Miss Mitchell's will. The tenth share, also amounting to about \$15,000, was bequeathed to the American Unitarian Association, Boston, in memory of Miss Mitchell's mother, the late Mrs. Sarah A. (Lord) Mitchell.

The bequest to the Old People's Home was specified as in memory of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Mitchell; that to the Historical Association in memory of Captain Joseph Mitchell 2nd and his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth B. Mitchell; and that to the Atheneum in memory of the late James Mitchell.

Miss Mitchell also made three separate bequests of \$2000, \$1000 and \$500 to the Prospect Hill Cemetery Association for the perpetual care of three specific plots; \$1500 to the Lowell Cemetery, also for the care of a specified lot; and \$5000 to the Nantucket Relief Association, the income to be used for the work of the organization.

Individuals to whom specific bequests were made are Ethel Wood Tower of Sandwich, to whom Miss Mitchell left \$5000, and Franklin Folger Webster of Nantucket, to whom she left all of her stock in the Pacific National Bank of Nantucket and, through a codicil, all of her interest in any real estate on Nantucket, including her Sconset home and its contents.

She provided, under the latter, that the Nantucket Historical Association may choose from the furnishings of the Sconset house such articles as it may desire, subject to the approval of Mr. Webster.

Dec. 2, 1960



## "Nantucket House" Property Now Deeded to Historical Association

In the latter part of 1961 it was announced that the Nantucket Historical Trust would purchase from Marvin and Malcolm R. Parle the "Nantucket House" and the lot on which it stands, at the southeast corner of North Water Street and Whalers Lane. It was stated, also, that this property would be given to the Nantucket Historical Association so as to enlarge its land holdings at Broad and North Water Streets.

The acquisition of this property, in the opinion of the Council, would seem to solve a problem to be faced by the Association within the next few years of providing additional and more adaptable space to display its general exhibits. Additional acquisitions, welcomed by the Council, are rapidly filling all presently available space.

The Council of the Nantucket Historical Association now announces, with great pleasure and grateful appreciation, that the papers deeding this property to the Association were

signed early in January by the Nantucket Historical Trust and that the transfer is now being recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

Facing this problem, the Council some time ago appointed a committee to study the situation and to make

*(Continued on Page Four)*

### "Nantucket House" Property Given to Historical Association

*(Continued from Page One)*

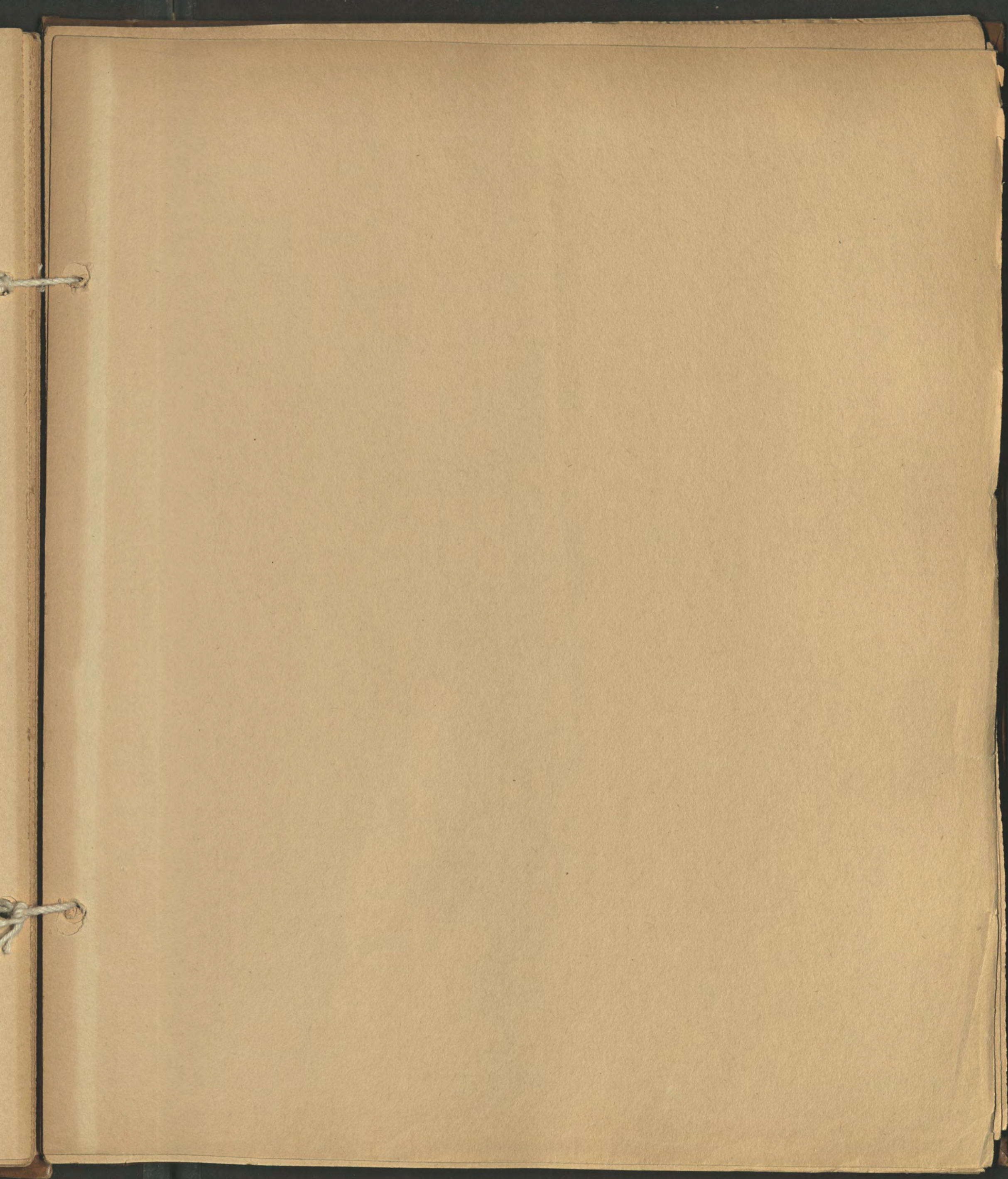
recommendations. Now that additional land has been secured directly adjacent to its undeveloped lot at Broad and North Water Streets, the committee is turning its attention to planning the erection of an appropriately designed new building. This would mean the eventual razing of the Nantucket House.

Laying out such plans and financing the project will undoubtedly not be completed for a number of years. The Council of the Association is, therefore, entering into an agreement with the Parles as tenants for continued occupancy and use of the building and land as a guest house until the fall of 1962 and possibly longer until the property is needed by the Association for its own use.

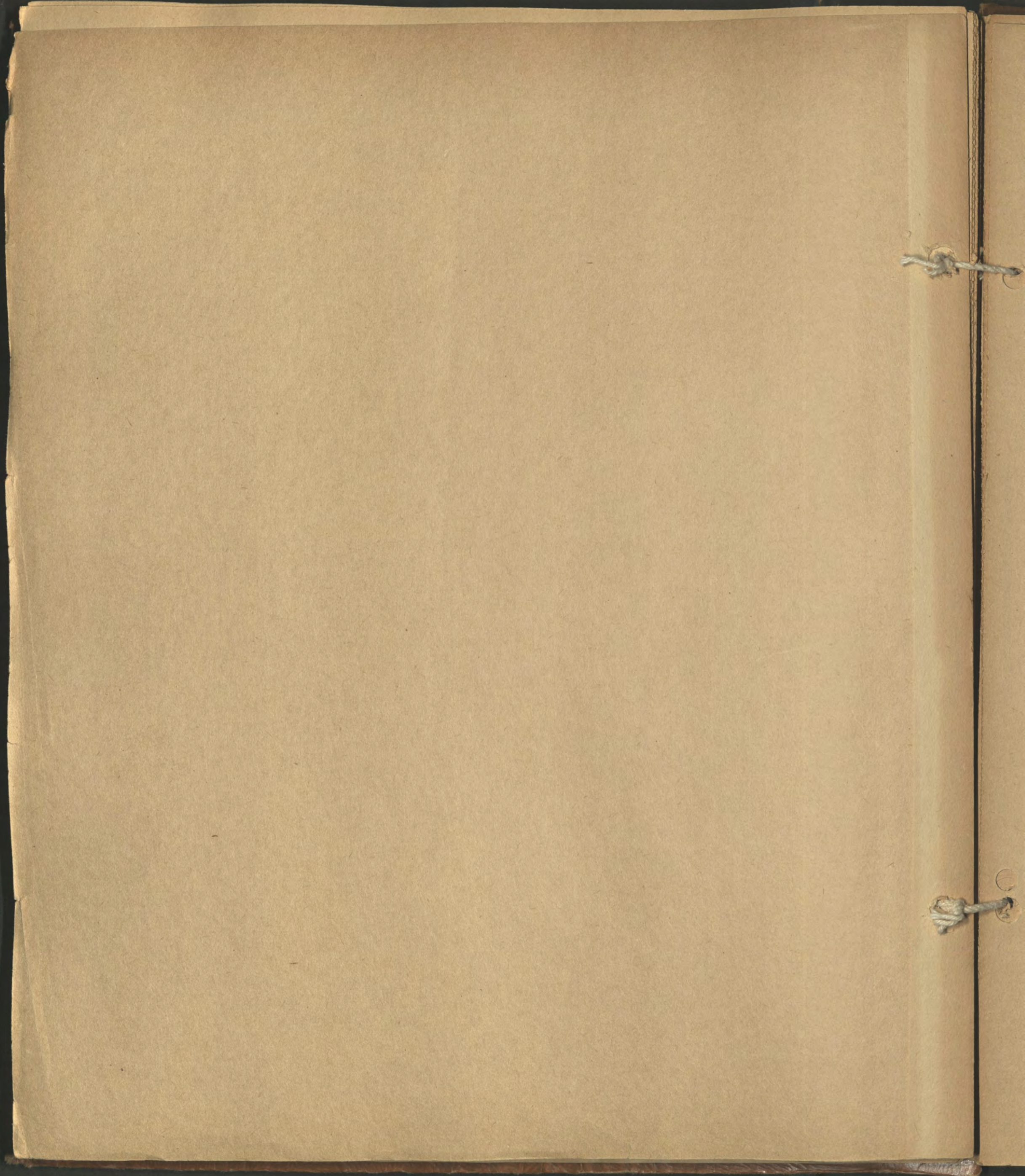
Appropriate resolutions are being formally adopted by the Council of the Nantucket Historical Association, which will be presented to the Nantucket Historical Trust in grateful acknowledgement of the Trust's generous gift and continued interest in the work of the Association.

*Jan. 24, 1962*





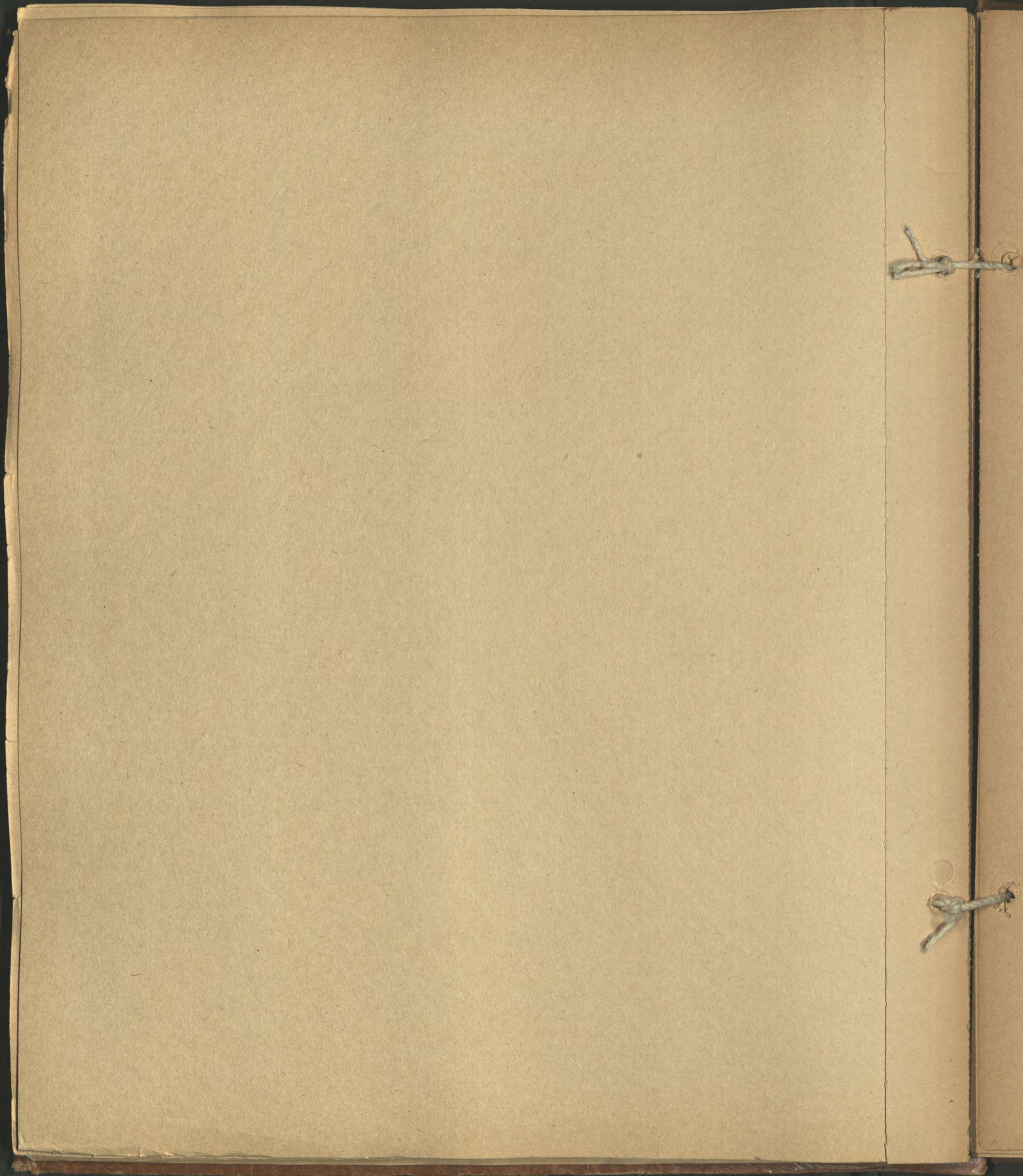






GAMS







## Tales And Memories Of Island's Bygone Days Revived At Old Fashioned 'Gam'

By Alice B. Howard

A gaunt, pungent ghost, by name Miss Hannah Sheffield, rose from the mists of the Nantucket Historical Association "gam" held Wednesday evening at the Maria Mitchell Library. Viewed with lighted affection by Edouard Stackpole, president and presiding officer of the evening and by Howard Barber, chairman of the program, she fascinated the 60 odd members and guests gathered in a double oval in the library room.

In the first Association "gam" since 1943, Mr. Stackpole began the reminiscing by presenting a program from the graduation Ball of 1900 held at the old roller skating rink. Music, the program read, was by Barrett's Orchestra and Stanley F. Johnson was floor chairman.

Briefly mentioning her own excellent collection of dance and entertainment programs, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, read a letter written by Miss Vera Sickles, now a full professor of Speech at Smith College, who sent her regrets for being unable to attend the gathering. She added, however, that when time permitted she would record in the Speech Laboratory of the College her own girlhood recollections of the Island for the enjoyment of the Association.

Background continued to set mood and pace when Mr. Stackpole asked what sidewheelers plied the restless ocean back in 1900 and which of them was the best. Captain Arthur McCleave spoke of the Nantucket, the Gayhead, Our Island Home and others. The best of them, according to the Captain, was Our Island Home. It was the same year, Miss Josephine Congdon said, that she opened her first kindergarten class and her sister, the late Miss May Congdon, began her long association with the Nantucket Public Schools as music and art teacher. Photographs of the 1900 cattle show with Allan Coffin sporting a stovepipe hat, in the center of one group, were passed by Mrs. Elkins Hutaff who recalled that an ice revue presented in 1895 featured international marriages. Garbed in flowing toga, she represented Rome. Occasionally, she said, the rink was used by the graduating class for the annual ball.

At this point the "impatient ghost" of Hannah Sheffield reasserted itself. It was Mrs. Joseph King who breathed life into the well-remembered figure.

### Miss Sheffield Recalled

Miss Sheffield, bright red shawl pinned about her shoulders, dispensed, at the turn of the century, excellent merchandise across the counters of her shop on Petticoat Row. There, chin thrust forward, retaining a customer's change in her hand, she would talk happily about events. Perhaps Mrs. King commented, she had recently been "taken off her feet"—

once, Hannah told Mrs. King she was "taken off her feet with three discint troubles". Briefly interpreted, Hannah had been ill.

She was a familiar character to the Island children, Mrs. King continued, for she remembered being one of the many who went blocks around to reach Main Street without passing "Buttons and Trimmings" which was located where Howell's Linen Store is now. Why the detour? It was the invariable custom of Hannah to place a kerosene can whose spout was draped with a potato outside the shop door. This, the children knew, indicated that the first to pass was to pick up the can, carry it to the corner store (now Ashley's), fill the can and return it to the same place!

The stories surrounding the kindly Hannah are almost endless for her personality was unique. One of these related by Mrs. King concerned Willy Morris who had at one time rented an apartment above her shop. A customer entering one morning found Willy lying in a rubber bath tub. "My God, Hannah," she said, "He's dead!" "No, he's not," came the calm answer, "I'm trying it out for size." Hannah had bought five tubs in order to get one free. She never sold any of them.

### Learned Cycling At Home

Perhaps one of the best stories extant about the irreplaceable lady developed around her secret purchase of a bicycle which she carried to her upper hall. There in the long, narrow area she taught herself to ride. One day, feeling sufficiently competent, she ventured into the street with her new enthusiasm and triumphantly rode down Centre Street towards North Beach Road. But suddenly an unfortunate lurch landed her into a nearby sewer. The next morning there was another sign in the shop window tucked next to one that read "Undressed kids for sale here." The new one told Nantucket that Miss Sheffield had "One female bicycle for sale."

Her talent for conversation which covered all subjects including the "peder-sterians" who passed her windows baffled the salesmen who twice annually came to the Island for orders. She always managed to talk to them without giving a definite order until just before the whistle on the boat blew a warning. Finally the desperate men instituted a system. By working out shifts one of them was always attending Hannah while the others took their turns at covering other merchants. Thus, Miss Sheffield could have her talk out, yet the salesmen accomplished the purpose of their visits—orders!

A little reluctantly the lively ghost of Hannah was laid aside for another equally flavorsome Island character—Captain William Baxter. Captain Baxter, following his retirement from whaling, drove the stage coach to Siasconset, as many will remember still. Yarns about the old gentleman were collected from almost everyone present but Mrs. King told one of the best.

For many years, she began, the old Captain and his daughter Love carried mail to the village of Siasconset, there to dispense it from their own home. In due course a sign was tacked to the door indicating that at the home was located the official Post Office. Shortly thereafter, the yarn continued, an unneighborly complaint reached the United States Post Master in Washington, D. C. Promptly an agent was dispatched to the Island to investigate. By great good fortune Captain Baxter met that boat

and upon offering his services to an off-Islander discovered what the man wanted. "You've come to the right man," he said and together they started out to find the village of Siasconset.

### 'Round and 'Round'

Carefully and thoroughly the Captain went up and down the village streets searching for the house which bore the sign claiming extravagantly to be the village Post Office. After hours of baffling search, the agent finally con-

cluded he had been misinformed and perhaps he'd better find a room for the night. With a sympathetic sigh, Baxter turned the carriage around and they headed back to Nantucket. The next day as he watched the boat round Brant Point, the investigator safely aboard, Captain Baxter admitted to a slight error. He had driven around and around the village of Polpis—most unfortunately not finding a sign which sinned against the laws of the land!

The brush with the law behind him, the wily old Captain continued on his merry way engaging his stage passengers with tales such as only he could tell. A frequent habit of his, someone said, was to pretend deafness. He would bait a pretty, young tourist with a tidbit of information, then clam up while she and her companion thoroughly discussed it and him into the bargain. Then as though awakened from a brief nap he would enter into their frank conversation at the point where it would most embarrass them.

Once, another story-teller claimed, at the 7½ mile stone on the Siasconset Road, Captain Baxter leaned forward and pointed it out with a flourish of his whip. There—right at that spot—he would declare solemnly, were buried seven and one half Indians—seven men and a child.

Someone else added this yarn to the ones fast accumulating around the irrepressible captain. Occasionally as he passed the duck pond across the present Hollywood Farm he would draw the stage to a standstill, turn to the middle-aged ladies and extol its waters as the only permanent cure for corns. Many a believing lady has climbed down from her high seat, modestly removed shoes and stockings and bathed her feet in the healing waters. One even ordered, it is said, a gallon of the water shipped to her that she might continue the treatment at home.

### Tuckernuck Is Subject

Deviating from the famed personalities of the Island, Moderator Stackpole offered Tuckernuck, its University and its wild horses as the next topic. Everett Chapel, born on that Island, admitted that in 1903 he attended "The University" and was instructed by Miss Susie Barrett. He recalled that in his class were Eddie Coffin and his sisters; then, speaking parenthetically, he added that some claim if you came from Tuckernuck you lived on nothing but codfish and eels.

From the far window sill Gilbert Manter chimed in he had heard there was only one horse on the Island of Tuckernuck. John H. Bartlett, Jr. then launched into a yarn about the stamina of the wild horses. He said, "I remember one horse that swam across to Eel Point at Madaket. You know, James Dunham used to say that a Tuckernuck horse needed neither a rubbing down nor a blanket. Well this one was harnessed as he came out of the water and driven to Siasconset, then on to Surfside. Somewhat late in the day Henry Chase noticed the same animal tied on Main Street in Nantucket, still chilled and wet. He promptly covered the horse with a blanket—and he claimed that horse never walked again!"

Frank Ramsdell then struck in with the explanation of the name Warren's Landing at Madaket. The landing at their house named for his father had become with the increase of freight from Tuckernuck a general way-station for goods. "For one dollar," he said, "anyone could rent a horse and wagon of my father, drive the produce to town, and return the outfit next day." As to the wildness of horses on the other Island he cited a ride he took with Robbie Dunham at the age of six. "If that farm wagon could be found today," he added, "I guarantee the marks of my fingers would be found there also!"

### Physician's Diary Recalled

Mrs. George W. Jones of Point Road and daughter of Ellenwood Coleman, Island physician, brought three of her father's diaries with her. From the time the

over



doctor was 15, Mrs. Jones said, until his death he kept careful daily entries. She added, "If anyone is interested I would be glad to supply his weight at birth."

One of Dr. Coleman's entries spoke of a town meeting which began on February 7, 1899 and continued well into the second week. The burning issue had been the water question. He also noted, Mrs. Jones read from the diary, that a special town meeting was called in June of 1901 to appropriate \$500 to water the streets. The same month he mentioned buying at auction the old Episcopal Church for \$85. Removed to Brant Point it was later incorporated into a house. In entries for May 1899 he wrote of receiving from the widow of Capt. Thomas A. Hallet a large picture of the whaleship Niger on which the doctor had shipped years before. The picture, given by Mrs. Jones, now hangs in the Whaling Museum.

Miss Edith M. Sandsbury spoke with natural pride of her father, Captain Thomas Sandsbury who devoted so many years to the Life Saving Station at Muskeget and Madaket. The medals he earned by his valor were rarely mentioned by him, she recalled, and it wasn't until after his death in 1903 that she fully realized how many awards he had received.

A general discussion of Island school days brought out several well-remembered points. Mr. Stackpole recalled the old Orange Street School where town meetings and elections were held in the upstairs room. An amusing anecdote of that early necessary evil—public examinations—was told by Mrs. Jones. During one such session a member of the School Committee paused in front of the frightened scholars. Of the first he asked for the spelling of a word which sounded rather like "egg-wiped" but wasn't. All failed to spell it correctly, Mrs. Jones continued. Finally the member of the School Board admitted to the hope that someone might know how to spell "Egypt."

#### School Burning Mystery Unsolved

Miss Gardner suggested she would like a school mystery cleared up—a very old mystery indeed. What lay behind the destruction by fire of the old Polpis schoolhouse? Allen Backus declared he knew nothing about that although he clearly recalled Miss Fisher who taught eight pupils of which he was one, in eight different grades, yet maintained such excellent discipline that a birch rod was unheard of.

Perhaps the most moving story of the evening was told by Frank Conway whose father, Captain John, rounded the Horn thirty-three times! Mr. Conway's mother frequently voyaged with her husband and her harrowing experience in the China Sea during a typhoon, Mr. Conway said, cured her of any further desire to travel. The Captain, he explained, had had to go ashore on business, leaving his wife and two small sons aboard with the first mate in charge. During the afternoon the storm struck. With the ship drag-

ging anchor, with the horrible noise of the storm, the mother was paralyzed by fear. It wasn't until her husband, after frantic hours of trying to get to the ship, finally came aboard hand over hand on a rope that she was able to regain any kind of calm. As though the storm itself were not enough, their ship collided with the iron-bottomed Kearsarge and had to be towed ashore for repairs. The good Captain sent his wife and children home by train as soon as he could possibly reach the port of San Francisco swearing never again to risk their lives in a ship.

Like the "gams" of whaling days this refreshing evening of the Nantucket Historical Association was just warming to a genuine exchange of countless other good yarns when Mr. Stackpole regretfully brought the meeting to a close.

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 1951



## "I Remember Night" Proved An Enjoyable Occasion.

The library of the Maria Mitchell Association on Vestal street was filled to its capacity on Monday evening. A representative group of Nantucketers were present at the invitation of the Nantucket Historical Association to take part in the second "Winter Gam" which the Association has sponsored in recent years.

Following a brief "welcome" by the chairman for the evening, Edouard Stackpole, the committee chairman, Howard Barber, told the group that it had been originally planned to have a rather elaborate affair at Bennett Hall but the committee had finally concluded the same type of "gam" as that held in 1943 would be more in keeping at this time.

For the next two hours a variety of reminiscences characterized one of the most enjoyable evenings yet sponsored by the Historical Association.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner, whose work in the field of island history is so valuable, brought with her several programs issued for the graduation balls of the Nantucket High School from 1896 to 1902. These were passed about for the further pleasure of those present. It was noted that the Class of 1900 held its ball at the "Skating Rink," with Stanley E. Johnson, Principal of the High School, as the floor leader, and the music being furnished by Barrett's Orchestra.

This started a train of thought on the "Rink" and its wonderful hardwood floor. As one island lady remarked, "We had such good times at the old rink, and some of the balls were really elaborate affairs."

Miss Josephine Congdon, of School street, mentioned that the year 1900 marked the time when her sister, the late Miss May H. Congdon, became the instructor in drawing and music for the Nantucket schools. This immediately brought up many pleasant memories of the years when Miss Congdon did so much to further the education of her pupils in the field of music and art.

Mrs. Alfred Shurrocks gave a short but concise account of the launching of the Maria Mitchell Association, which was founded in 1902, through the impetus and continued interest of Mrs. Hinchman. The Library, in which the meeting was being held, was originally the schoolhouse of William Mitchell, father of the illustrious Maria, and after going through various changes it has become one of Nantucket's prized libraries.

Mrs. Alice P. Amey, of Gardner street, had a picture snapped in 1901 which showed one of the Atlantic Squadron battle-cruisers, anchored in the Chord of the Bay, during the big fleet's official visit to Nantucket. She also read portions of an interesting letter written in 1861 by her grandmother, which told of the Sanitary Commission's work at the Civil War's outbreak.

Talk then switched to the schools and suddenly swung over to Tuckernuck. There were three people present who had gone to school on Tuckernuck island—Miss Edith Sandsbury, James Everett Chapel and Frank W. Ramsdell.

Mr. Chapel told of the one-room schoolhouse and, further than that, he showed a picture of the school with the James Dunham house in the background.

Both Miss Sandsbury and Mr. Chapel were born on Tuckernuck. Mr. Ramsdell, who was born at Madaket, told of being taken across to Tuckernuck, together with his brother Marcus, by his father, Warren Ramsdell, so that the two boys could attend the Tuckernuck school. Later in the year, the two boys were to go to the town school.

Mr. Ramsdell also told of being driven each day to town by his father, so that the "Ramsdell boys" could attend school.

"Getting up each morning so that we could leave at 7:30, and then not getting back home again until 5:00 o'clock meant a long day," he said.

He also told something about the origin of "Warren's Landing," that place in Madaket where Tuckernuck residents would land en route to town. A horse and wagon was always available at the Ramsdell farm, and the Tuckernuck folk would hitch up and bring their quahaugs, scallops or eels to town for sale or shipment.

Mr. Chapel, born on Tuckernuck, gave an interesting account of the one-room schoolhouse and recalled his teachers. Gilbert Manter asked him to tell something about the "wild horses" on Tuckernuck. Mr. Chapel recalled one horse which was rather wild as he "had the run of the island." This brought out further information on the part of John H. Bartlett, who recounted how his father had purchased the horse and that he had been taken over to Eel Point, "swimming the distance in tow of a dory." Mr. Bartlett, Sr., had inquired: "Hadh't we better rub the horse down?" it being a cold fall day, and the reply: "Oh, he'll be all right—he's a Tuckernuck horse."

Mr. Chapel also told of an experience he had when, with other men, he was "burning off grass" on Tuckernuck preparatory to plowing, and how burning seaweed spread the fire out of control, eventually burning down one house. Life-Saving crews from Madaket and Muskeget came over to the island to help check the flames. "That was a hard day," recalled Mr. Chapel with a wry smile.

Miss Sandsbury recalled her childhood days on Tuckernuck. She proudly mentioned her father, Capt. Thomas F. Sandsbury, of Tuckernuck.

"He was the first keeper of the Life Saving Station on Muskeget," she recalled. "But when it was found that he could not be at his home on Tuckernuck as much as he wished to be, he resigned. But there was one wreck to which he took his crew that I have often heard him speak of. It was a wrecked schooner, which was on her beam ends on Tuckernuck shoals.

Only one man was alive when father finally got his boat out to the wreck, and one of the boat's crew, the late George E. Coffin, volunteered to jump on board the schooner and save him. It was a daring thing to do but Coffin got on board and made a line fast to the wreck, by which the one survivor was rescued."

The wreck referred to by Miss Sandsbury was that of the schooner *Emma G. Edwards*, wrecked March 31st, 1879. Capt. Sandsbury received a gold medal and his boat's-crew each a silver medal by special act of Congress for their heroic rescue. Ten schooners were wrecked around Nantucket in that violent March gale.

When Madaket Coast Guard station was erected in December, 1891, Capt. Sandsbury was appointed its first Keeper.

The picture of the little school house brought to mind the original Polpis school and its successor. There was the question: "Does anyone know how the old school house caught fire and burned to the ground?" This was not answered but some one immediately inquired: "Who remembers the Farmers' Institute at Polpis?"

Mrs. Alma Backus remembered it, and said in part: "Every Saturday night, the folks living in and around Polpis used to get together at one or another's house and have a baked-bean supper. Often, later in the evening, the men would drift over to the little building in Polpis known as the Farmers' Institute, where they would smoke and talk and play checkers."

J. Allen Backus recalled going to school at Polpis, where there were eight pupils in one room and as many grades and education was often gained rapidly by the astute pupils. He remembered his teach at that time as Miss Eldora Fisher.

Wallace Long recalled that the old bell which for years hung on the Polpis Schoolhouse came from the 3-masted schooner *Fisk*.

Mrs. Rozelle (Coleman) Jones then read a few excerpts from the diary of her father, Dr. Ellenwood B. Coleman. Not only did this well-known Nantucket physician keep a record of the weather but he had made note of outstanding occurrences in and about the island. One notation concerned the wreck of the barkentine *Culdoon*, wrecked on the South Shore on March 23, 1898, loaded with 1,142 bales of cotton.

Dr. Coleman noted in his diary that he had driven out to the South Shore behind his good horse "Rex" and had "enjoyed the trip very much," the scene at the beach, with the stranded craft and the salvaging operations being "a sight I wouldn't have missed."

High tides, school examinations, town meetings (which lasted for a week), and, Mrs. Jones remarked with a smile, the birth-weights of the babies ushered into island life by the doctor, were all noted in these interesting diaries.

One of the storms described in terse words by Dr. Coleman was that which occurred in November, 1899, known these years since as the "Portland Storm."

Wallace Long remarked:

"As Capt. Zeb Tilton would say, 'it blew so hard during that storm that it took two men to keep one man's hat on!'"

Mrs. James E. Chapel stated that she remembered the "Portland storm" vividly when, as a girl in Vineyard Haven, she saw the snow being whipped along in horizontal streaks and the many craft in Holmes Hole harbor coming ashore.

"The year that the *Culdoon* came ashore was the same one when the *St. Elmo* was lost, wasn't it, Cap'n?" asked Wallace Long, turning to Capt. Arthur McCleave.

"Yes," was the reply, "the schooner *St. Elmo* was sighted off 'Seonset a few days after the *Culdoon* came ashore. We got the Humane boat out and went out to her. Only one man of the schooner's crew was saved."

"What about the sugar-bark, the *Mentor*?" someone asked. "When was she salvaged?"

"That was earlier, in the spring of 1893," responded Capt. McCleave. "I didn't get in on that operation. That morning I went over to Surfside to pick up a dory and soon afterwards the *Mentor* was sighted again, with her sails set. We had seen her off-shore at day break but everyone believed she was a fisherman, but when she came drifting back again, they launched the big boat and went out to her. They found her abandoned with all sails set—and 550 tons of sugar under her hatchets. They worked her out of shoal water and finally got her into Vineyard Haven safely. A couple of dozen Nantucketers got \$700 apiece in salvage money for that day's work."

The *Mentor* was a Norwegian bark, and her cargo of 550 tons of sugar, loaded in Cuba, bound for Boston, was valued at \$70,000. When the bark became entangled in the shoals east of the island her crew took to the boats and went aboard Great Round Shoal Lightship, afterwards rejoining their "lost" bark at Boston.

Someone asked: "What ever became of the old Surfside Hotel? I recall it collapsed. Did it just fall to pieces?"

John H. Bartlett supplied the information: "My father, the late John Bartlett, and Wallace Gardner bought the building," said Mr. Bartlett. "I've heard my father tell of the auction and, with Mr. Gardner, of deciding to bid \$75 for it. They finally got it for \$80. Father built his house at the farm out of the lumber, and part of Mt. Vernon farmhouse is also built from the lumber they hauled over."

Gilbert Manter brought out the further fact that field-stones from the structure's foundation went into the cellar walls and foundation of the Manter home on Pleasant street.

The old hotel at Surfside was originally the Riverside Hotel, on the Providence River, which was taken down in 1883 and removed to Nantucket in sections on schooners. It formally opened on July 4, 1883, but its existence as a hostelry was less than two decades.



Memories of the Surfside land boom brought out the days of the "Flying Horses" on Steamboat wharf. The building, now known as the restaurant "The Skipper," was the site of this novelty in island life. This structure was originally erected off Milk street, just beyond Monument Square, as a print-shop for *The Inquirer and Mirror* in 1890. Eleven years later it was removed to Steamboat wharf for the "Flying Horses," and after the demise of that enterprise it was the headquarters for a steam-laundry. In 1921, it became "The Skipper," in conjunction with the old schooner *Allen Gurney*.

Several people recalled the "Flying Horses," and one mentioned that the engineer of the steam engine which ran the one-circular row of "horses" was the late Ed Whelden.

From the "merry-go-round," the conversation quickly shifted to the days of the "horse-cars." This enterprise originated in the fertile brain of Thomas G. Macy. At first the tracks led from Federal street to the wharf, thence to Brant Point.

"I recall riding on the horse-cars as a little girl," said Mrs. Alma (Gibbs) Backus. "My father was the conductor for several seasons."

Whatever became of the horse-cars? Several men remembered that one of them gradually fell to pieces in a field on North Beach street, and that another was in the "Jim Wood" lot, opposite Sea Cliff Inn for a number of years.

It was inevitable that mention would be made of the famed "Nantucket Central Railroad," which ran to 'Sconset for so many years. The familiar tooting of the locomotive's whistle and the ringing of her bell could again be sounded in the memories of those present.

"The Pullman Lunch car is the only thing left of the railroad, isn't it?" someone asked.

There was no recollection of any other relic still existing.

Capt. McCleave told a humorous story about a member of the crew of the *Island Home* coming on board the island steamer wearing a broad grin.

"I'm a father," he announced, "the baby arrived last night. I'll bet you don't know which it is?"

"Was it a boy?" asked Mate Fitzgerald, who was Capt. McCleave's grandfather.

"No," replied the other, shaking his head.

"A girl then," chuckled the Mate.

"Somebody told you," exclaimed the new father.

Wallace Long told of some of the old schooners which lay at the harbor wharves half a century ago. He also made mention of several of the old-time boatmen. One of these was Capt. Parker Hall, the famous skipper of schooners who often sailed alone up and down the coast.

In recounting tales about the waterfront, it was natural to hear the name *Petrel*. This doughty little island fishing steamer, the first of her kind in these waters, could have an entire evening devoted to her and her exploits.

Perhaps the most dramatic story of the night was told by Frank Conway. The story was launched soon after the names of "Joe" Barney and "Fred" Sanford had been brought up. Mr. Conway mentioned that it was Fred Sanford who had loaned \$50 to his father, Capt. Patrick Conway, when the latter, a youth, wished to get to New York to sign on board a sea-going ship.

Mr. Conway then told of some of his father's experiences; as a boy in the *N. B. Palmer*, under Capt. Low; as Mate of the *St. Nicholas*, under Capt. Bill Joy, of Nantucket; and as master of the ship *Lucille*.

On several of his voyages, Capt. Conway took his wife, the late Mrs. Stella Conway. On one of these voyages, when the ship lay in the roadstead of Manila Bay, the typhoon suddenly roared in from the open sea. Capt. Conway was on shore at the time and for hours watched helplessly while the *Lucille* dragged her anchors.

Down in the cabin, Mrs. Conway with her two sons, Sidney and John, then mere babes, waited and prayed while the storm lashed the ship. Then she heard a well-known voice on deck, shouting orders. She recognized her husband's familiar tones—but how had he managed to get aboard? Explanation came later. After hours of seeking, a tug-captain finally agreed to take Capt. Conway out to his storm-threatened ship. But the tug could not get close enough to put the skipper aboard and finally a line was thrown up to the ship. When the line was made fast to the rigging, Capt. Conway crossed the watery gap between the tug and the ship by going hand-over-hand along the rope.

Recollections of the famous Capt. William Baxter, who drove the stage "Swiftsure" to 'Sconset, kept the village post office, and was the most popular liveryman of the town in his day, brought out many amusing stories.

In the columns of *The Inquirer and Mirror*, as of June, 1891, the following is a typical advertisement of this redoubtable mariner:

#### BACKSTIR

"This Ancient Mariner, by sea and land, has forsaken the former and confines his efforts no more to trackless wastes. His side-wheel craft, the *Swiftsure*, will get launched Monday May 11, 1891, for the season. She has been safely rigged, and is supplied with hard cushions for invalids and soft seats for lovers. Deaf ear turned to cooing and billing, all confidences strictly confidential and no gossip repeated. Rates reduced to all parts of island. Mooring at H. S. Wyer's depot post. Orders may be left at his depot, and will be filled if I have the time and patience."

W. Baxter.

Nantucket humor would not have a complete accounting if it did not include stories of Hannah Sheffield, who kept store on Petticoat Row for many years. These stories brought one laugh after another. Mrs. Charlotte Giffin King told of Miss Sheffield's unsuccessful efforts to learn to ride a bicycle and the sign which later appeared in the shop window: "Female bicycle for sale."

Mrs. Lizzie Robinson, who at one time worked for Miss Sheffield, gave an amusing account of her attempt to sell rubber bath tubs. Her story of the ten-cent piece and the "upper plate" brought down the house.

Mrs. Hutaff told about the little pond on the 'Sconset road which Capt. Baxter named "Corn Pond," and to which he attributed wonderful curative powers for all types of corns.

Mrs. Charlotte King told of the complaint issued because of the sign "U. S. Post Office" on the Baxter house in 'Sconset, and of Capt. Baxter taking the government inspector from the wharf out into Polpis—where careful inspection revealed no unauthorized sign designating the 'Sconset post office.

It was well after ten o'clock when the chairman regretfully announced that the "gam" was to end. With the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" the group of reminiscencers disbanded—but with looks forward, instead of backward to next year's "I Remember Night."

MARCH 10, 1951.

### Lectured at New Bedford on "Old Nantucket."

From New Bedford Standard-Times.

Edouard Stackpole, President of the Nantucket Historical Association, conducted a capacity audience at the Old Dartmouth Historical Society's auditorium Monday night on a pictorial tour of old Nantucket.

"Looking Backward in Old Nantucket" was the title of Mr. Stackpole's talk, which was illustrated with slides from the Turner Collection of the Nantucket Historical Association. The pictures, some of which were taken nearly a century ago, were unusually clear and beautiful. The speaker was introduced by Frederic H. Taber, President of the Old Dartmouth Society.

Starting with a view of Main street square, showing the Pacific Bank and the Methodist Church, two of the oldest of the larger structures of the town, scenes showing old streets and lanes were shown. A diagram revealed the extent of the great fire of 1846. A dispute between two volunteer fire companies allowed the fire to get such a start that the business district and waterfront were entirely destroyed by the flames, Mr. Stackpole stated.

The speaker pointed out the characteristics of Nantucket's early architecture, the "lean-to" style, (called on the mainland "salt-box"), the side-steps, porches, highboard fences and "walks" on the roofs.

What Mr. Stackpole deplored was the use of modern concrete paving covering some of the old cobbled streets. He pointed out the great advantage to the appearance of the old town to restore these streets. A view from the tower showed a part of the town which had 400 houses all over a century old.

"Millions were spent to restore Williamsburg," said Mr. Stackpole, "but we need only to preserve what we already have in Nantucket."

Other views included the community pumps, once so important to the townspeople; the Old Mill, built the same year Princeton University was established; houses "restored" more than 100 years ago when four chimneys of the Georgian type of architecture were installed; the Folger house, first in town to have 3 storeys; the Portuguese bell in the old South Tower, which had to be hidden during the War of 1812 to avoid being taken by the British; houses made famous by reason of stories written about them, such as the three Starbuck brick mansions and the Hussey-Caldwell house; the open-air auctions on Main street, and the open-air fish market which was nothing more than a cart whose location was governed by the wind direction, so as not to spread unpleasant odors.

There was a picture of the Ocean House, with President Ulysses Grant standing on the porch steps, and later Mr. Stackpole showed a picture of President Woodrow Wilson arriving at the island. There were pictures of Abram Quary, the last Island Indian; Capt. Charles Grant, who, Mr. Stackpole said, made more money out of whaling than any other captain; the wrecks, bark *W. F. Marshall* and the schooner *T. B. Witherspoon*; the old-time sidewheel steamers and Coast Guard cutters which served the island during "freeze-ups."

Pictures showed the passing of the horse and the introduction of the auto, the arrival of Clinton Folger's Oldsmobile during the "exclusion era;" Billy Clark, a well-known town crier; the coming of the first steam railway cars (weirdly impressive); and views recording the end of several ships held the rapt attention of the audience.

The late Standish Wilcox, a native of New Bedford, former newspaperman in this city and Boston, and later social secretary for Mayor Curley in Boston, was shown at Nantucket, departing from the beach during a freeze-up and wearing one of two silk "toppers" he always took on his trips.

It was an hour of delight to the audience and recalled some familiar scenes to many present.

William H. Tripp, Curator of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, assisted the speaker by operating the lantern which projected the pictures.

Presiding at the coffee table were Mrs. Frederic T. Browne, Jr., Miss Eleanor Huston and Miss Rachel Grinnell.

Feb. 7, 1951



## Tales And Memories Of Island's Bygone Days Revived At Old Fashioned 'Gam'

A gaunt, pungent ghost, by name Miss Hannah Sheffield, rose from the mists of the Nantucket Historical Association "gam" held Wednesday evening at the Maria Mitchell Library. Viewed with lighted affection by Edouard Stackpole, president and presiding officer of the evening and by Howard Barber, chairman of the program, she fascinated the 60 odd members and guests gathered in a double oval in the library room.

In the first Association "gam" since 1943, Mr. Stackpole began the reminiscing by presenting a program from the graduation Ball of 1900 held at the old roller skating rink. Music, the program read, was by Barrett's Orchestra and Stanley F. Johnson was floor chairman.

Briefly mentioning her own excellent collection of dance and entertainment programs, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, read a letter written by Miss Vera Sickles, now a full professor of Speech at Smith College, who sent her regrets for being unable to attend the gathering. She added, however, that when time permitted she would record in the Speech Laboratory of the College her own girlhood recollections of the Island for the enjoyment of the Association.

Background continued to set mood and pace when Mr. Stackpole asked what sidewheelers plied the restless ocean back in 1900 and which of them was the best. Captain Arthur McCleave spoke of the Nantucket, the Gayhead, Our Island Home and others. The best of them, according to the Captain, was Our Island Home. It was the same year, Miss Josephine Congdon said, that she opened her first kindergarten class and her sister, the late Miss May Congdon, began her long association with the Nantucket Public Schools as music and art teacher. Photographs of the 1900 cattle show with Allan Coffin sporting a stovepipe hat, in the center of one group, were passed by Mrs. Elkins Hutaff who recalled that an ice revue presented in 1895 featured international marriages. Garbed in flowing toga, she represented Rome. Occasionally, she said, the rink was used by the graduating class for the annual ball.

At this point the "impatient ghost" of Hannah Sheffield reasserted itself. It was Mrs. Joseph King who breathed life into the well-remembered figure.

### Miss Sheffield Recalled

Miss Sheffield, bright red shawl pinned about her shoulders, dispensed, at the turn of the century, excellent merchandise across the counters of her shop on Petticoat Row. There, chin thrust forward, retaining a customer's change in her hand, she would talk happily about events. Perhaps Mrs. King commented, she had recently been "taken off her feet"—once, Hannah told Mrs. King she was "taken off her feet with three discint troubles". Briefly interpreted, Hannah had been ill.

She was a familiar character to the Island children, Mrs. King continued, for she remembered being one of the many who went blocks around to reach Main Street without passing "Buttons and Trimmings" which was located where Howell's Linen Store is now. Why the detour? It was the invariable custom of Hannah to place a kerosene can whose spout was draped with a potato outside the shop door. This, the children knew, indicated that the first to pass was to pick up the can, carry it to the corner store (now Ashley's), fill the can and return it to the same place!

The stories surrounding the kindly Hannah are almost endless for her personality was unique. One of these related by Mrs. King concerned Willy Morris who had at one time rented an apartment above her shop. A customer entering one morning found Willy lying in a rubber bath tub. "My God, Hannah," she said, "He's dead!" "No, he's not," came the calm answer, "I'm trying it out for size." Hannah had bought five tubs in order to get one free. She never sold any of them.

### Learned Cycling At Home

Perhaps one of the best stories extant about the irreplaceable lady developed around her secret purchase of a bicycle which she carried to her upper hall. There in the long, narrow area she taught herself to ride. One day, feeling sufficiently competent, she ventured into the street with her new enthusiasm and triumphantly rode down Centre Street towards North Beach Road. But suddenly an unfortunate lurch landed her into a nearby sewer. The next morning there was another sign in the shop window tucked next to one that read "Undressed kids for sale here." The new one told Nantucket that Miss Sheffield had "One female bicycle for sale."

Her talent for conversation which covered all subjects including the "pedersterians" who passed her windows baffled the salesmen who twice annually came to the Island for orders. She always managed to talk to them without giving a definite order until just before the whistle on the boat blew a warning. Finally the desperate men instituted a system. By working out shifts one of them was always attending Hannah while the others took their turns at covering other merchants. Thus, Miss Sheffield could have her talk out, yet the salesmen accomplished the purpose of their visits—orders!

A little reluctantly the lively ghost of Hannah was laid aside for another equally flavorsome Island character—Captain William Baxter. Captain Baxter, following his retirement from whaling, drove the stage coach to Siasconset, as many will remember still. Yarns

about the old gentleman were collected from almost everyone present but Mrs. King told one of the best.

For many years, she began, the old Captain and his daughter Love carried mail to the village of Siasconset, there to dispense it from their own home. In due course a sign was tacked to the door indicating that at the home was located the official Post Office. Shortly thereafter, the yarn continued, an unneighborly complaint reached the United States Post Master in Washington, D. C. Promptly an agent was dispatched to the Island to investigate. By great good fortune Captain Baxter met that boat and upon offering his services to an off-Islander discovered what the man wanted. "You've come to the right man," he said and together they started out to find the village of Siasconset.

### 'Round and 'Round'

Carefully and thoroughly the Captain went up and down the village streets searching for the house which bore the sign claiming extravagantly to be the village Post Office. After hours of baffling search, the agent finally concluded he had been misinformed and perhaps he'd better find a room for the night. With a sympathetic sigh, Baxter turned the carriage around and they headed back to Nantucket. The next day as he watched the boat round Brant Point, the investigator safely aboard, Captain Baxter admitted to a slight error. He had driven around and around the village of Polpis—most unfortunately not finding a sign which sinned against the laws of the land!

The brush with the law behind him, the wily old Captain continued on his merry way engaging his stage passengers with tales such as only he could tell. A frequent habit of his, someone said, was to pretend deafness. He would bait a pretty, young tourist with a tidbit of information, then clam up while she and her companion thoroughly discussed it and him into the bargain. Then as though awakened from a brief nap he would enter into their frank conversation at the point where it would most embarrass them.

Once, another story-teller claimed, at the 7½ milestone on the Siasconset Road, Captain Baxter leaned forward and pointed it out with a flourish of his whip. There—right at that spot—he would declare solemnly, were buried seven and one half Indians—seven men and a child.

Someone else added this yarn to the ones fast accumulating around the irrepressible captain. Occasionally as he passed the duck pond across the present Hollywood Farm he would draw the stage to a standstill, turn to the middle-aged ladies and extol its waters as

the only permanent cure for corns. Many a believing lady has climbed down from her high seat, modestly removed shoes and stockings and bathed her feet in the healing waters. One even ordered, it is said, a gallon of the water shipped to her that she might continue the treatment at home.

### Tuckernuck Is Subject

Deviating from the famed personalities of the Island, Moderator Stackpole offered Tuckernuck, its University and its wild horses as the next topic. Everett Chapel, born on that Island, admitted that in 1903 he attended "The University" and was instructed by Miss Susie Barrett. He recalled that in his class were Eddie Coffin and his sisters; then, speaking parenthetically, he added that some claim if you came from Tuckernuck you lived on nothing but codfish and eels.

From the far window sill Gilbert Manter chimed in he had heard there was only one horse on the Island of Tuckernuck. John H. Bartlett, Jr. then launched into a yarn about the stamina of the wild horses. He said, "I remember one horse that swam across to Eel Point at Madaket. You know, James Dunham used to say that a Tuckernuck horse needed neither a rubbing down nor a blanket. Well this one was harnessed as he came out of the water and driven to Siasconset, then on to Surfside. Somewhat late in the day Henry Chase noticed the same animal tied on Main Street in Nantucket, still chilled and wet. He promptly covered the horse with a blanket—and he claimed that horse never walked again!"

Frank Ramsdell then struck in with the explanation of the name Warren's Landing at Madaket. The landing at their house named for his father had become with the increase of freight from Tuckernuck a general way-station for goods. "For one dollar," he said, "anyone could rent a horse and wagon of my father, drive the produce to town, and return the outfit next day." As to the wildness of horses on the other Island he cited a ride he took with Robbie Dunham at the age of six. "If that farm wagon could be found today," he added, "I guarantee the marks of my fingers would be found there also!"

### Physician's Diary Recalled

Mrs. George W. Jones of Point Road and daughter of Ellenwood Coleman, Island physician, brought three of her father's diaries with her. From the time the doctor was 15, Mrs. Jones said, until his death he kept careful daily entries. She added, "If anyone is interested I would be glad to supply his weight at birth."



One of Dr. Coleman's entries spoke of a town meeting which began on February 7, 1899 and continued well into the second week. The burning issue had been the water question. He also noted, Mrs. Jones read from the diary, that a special town meeting was called in June of 1901 to appropriate \$500 to water the streets. The

same month he mentioned buying at auction the old Episcopal Church for \$85. Removed to Brant Point it was later incorporated into a house. In entries for May 1899 he wrote of receiving from the widow of Capt. Thomas A. Hallet a large picture of the whaleship Niger on which the doctor had shipped years before. The picture, given by Mrs. Jones, now hangs in the Whaling Museum.

Miss Edith M. Sandsbury spoke with natural pride of her father, Captain Thomas Sandsbury who devoted so many years to the Life Saving Station at Muskeget and Madaket. The medals he earned by his valor were rarely mentioned by him, she recalled, and it wasn't until after his death in 1903 that she fully realized how many awards he had received.

A general discussion of Island school days brought out several well-remembered points. Mr. Stackpole recalled the old Orange Street School where town meetings and elections were held in the upstairs room. An amusing anecdote of that early necessary evil—public examinations—was told by Mrs. Jones. During one such session a member of the School Committee paused in front of the frightened scholars. Of the first he asked for the spelling of a word which sounded rather like "egg-wiped" but wasn't. All failed to spell it correctly, Mrs. Jones continued. Finally the member of the School Board admitted to the hope that someone might know how to spell "Egypt."

#### School Burning Mystery Unsolved

Miss Gardner suggested she would like a school mystery cleared up—a very old mystery indeed. What lay behind the destruction by fire of the old Polpis schoolhouse? Allen Backus declared he knew nothing about that although he clearly recalled Miss Fisher who taught eight pupils of which he was one, in eight different grades, yet maintained such excellent discipline that a birch rod was unheard of.

Perhaps the most moving story of the evening was told by Frank Conway whose father, Captain John, rounded the Horn thirty-three times! Mr. Conway's mother frequently voyaged with her husband and her harrowing experience in the China Sea during a typhoon, Mr. Conway said, cured her of any further desire to travel. The Captain, he explained, had had to go ashore on business, leaving his wife and two small sons aboard with the first mate in charge. During the afternoon the storm struck. With the ship dragging anchor, with the horrible noise of the storm, the mother was paralyzed by fear. It wasn't until her husband, after frantic hours of trying to get to the ship, finally

came aboard hand over hand on a rope that she was able to regain any kind of calm. As though the storm itself were not enough, their ship collided with the iron-bottomed Kearsarge and had to be towed ashore for repairs. The good Captain sent his wife and children home by train as soon as he could possibly reach the port of San Francisco swearing never

March 9, 1951

Ina.



## Bay State Historical League Enjoyed Nantucket "Gam".

On Friday evening the Bay State Historical League held its annual meeting here at the invitation of the Nantucket Historical Association, with President Stacy B. Southworth, of Braintree, presiding. Of the 125 member organizations, 44 were represented, with the largest visiting delegations present from the Fitchburg and Arlington historical societies. One member came all the way from the Western Hampden Historical Society at Westfield.

Newly elected officers were: President—Dr. A. Warren Stearns of Billerica, former dean of the Tufts Medical School; Vice-Presidents—Rev. Laurence L. Barber, of Arlington, Bertram K. Little, of Brookline, T. Temple Pond, of Boston; Secretary—Mrs. Winthrop P. Haynes, of Boxford; Treasurer—Paul C. Hanna, of Framingham. Mrs. Walton H. Adams, President of the Nantucket Historical Association, became one of the Directors-at-Large.

In welcoming the League, Mrs. Adams spoke briefly of the progress which has been made by the Nantucket Historical Association since its organization sixty years ago, and extended an invitation to all to see its exhibits. Visitors had previously been supplied with descriptive leaflets and tickets of general admission.

A Nantucket "gam", a custom which islanders have inherited from the whaling era when ships met in mid-ocean and men visited to exchange news and stories, was the featured entertainment of the evening. "Gamers", Mrs. Charlotte Giffin King, Mrs. Roselle Coleman Jones, Mrs. Adams, Dr. William E. Gardner, Edouard Stackpole, and George Jones, were introduced by Chairman Leroy H. True, who humorously apologized for being the only "off-islander" on the panel, attributing the error to his parents. Conversation then moved swiftly and story followed upon story as the group recalled Nantucket's past.

In outlining reasons for first settlement in 1659, George Jones emphasized the economic, although he noted that Thomas Macy and Tristram Coffin were well-to-do. Others, settling first in Massachusetts and finding a repetition of the English pattern of religious oppression, may have found the Island, then under the jurisdiction of New York, a place of refuge.

"Will" Gardner, "a self-acclaimed heretic about Tristram", injected lightly that he wasn't entirely certain that these explanations, albeit generally accepted, could be applied to this "cantankerous" early settler. Tristram, arriving first at Salisbury, moved often. While at Newbury he "formed a company and bought up Haverhill from the Indians". The deed, now to be seen at Exeter, N. H., was agreed upon for one arrow and one bow. Tristram only lived at Haverhill for four years, then returned to Newbury to operate a ferry from Carr's Island. Trouble arose here when Tristram's wife "made the beer too rich".

Dr. Gardner believes that Tristram "wished to express his individuality" and that "Nantucket was the place". Furthermore he suspects that Tristram and his son, Peter, who had vast lumber interests, owning both timber and sawmills, saw in Nantucket "a place to use this lumber". Therefore, upon meeting Thomas Mayhew in court and learning of the merits of the Island, "no lumber—good fish—good place for raising sheep, no wolves, but plenty of ponds for washing—" he shortly afterwards formed a company with Edward Starbuck and others. These early proprietors bought the land from Thomas Mayhew for "thirty pieces of silver and two beaver hats—one for Mayhew and one for his wife". He "raised Cain here, too!" Dr. Gardner characterized him as "irascible, dominating, and altogether an unfortunate man!" Irreligious, too, for he allowed for no church services.

Leroy True then remarked that the original price of the Island is now incorporated in the seal of the Nantucket Historical Association. The present assessed value of the Island is around \$13,000,000.

Later, Mr. Jones explained, the Indians collected "their pound of flesh" in a well-worded deed of transfer for an additional £26. The Island was shortly divided into twenty full- and fourteen half-shares, or 27 shares.

In answer to the chairman's question, "When did the proprietors begin to wrangle over property?" Mr. Jones went on to describe the development of two "factions". "The 'half-share men' led by John Gardner opposed Tristram's rule, and complaints to the New York governor were legion, the Coffin clan vs. the Gardner clan. Years later John's daughter, Mary, became engaged to Peter Coffin's son, Jethro. Peter agreed to give lumber for the house; John agreed to give the land. When the wedding day arrived, Peter inquired to see the deed. Upon discovering its absence, he declared, "No land, no wedding!" John had to produce the deed before the wedding ceremony could take place.

"And that deed has never been found!" ejaculated Dr. Gardner.

Mrs. Adams, reminded of the famous "Indian closet" story, told of the drunken Indian who fell into an upstairs closet through a loose board in the attic of Nantucket's unusual "Oldest House", built from Peter's lumber on John's land at the top of Sunset Hill. The Indian entered the adjoining bedroom where Mary, her husband off-island, was rocking her baby. Horrified when the savage began to sharpen his knife on the hearthstone, the young mother swept up her child and ran down the stairs and out of the house to safety, just barely avoiding the grasp of the Indian who, made unsteady from the effects of too much "fire-water", lurched and fell down the steps.

Mrs. Charlotte King suggested that the visitors might see in the dish closet of the Jethro Coffin House some pieces of green china. According to legend a Nantucket wife asked her whaling captain husband to bring her a set of china. After a four-year

voyage the captain returned with a very large set packed in a number of casks. When the first cask was unpacked in the kitchen, the mistress of the house looked at it, saw that it was green, and said simply, "I would have preferred thee had brought blue". The china was promptly stored away in the cellar, and the subject was never mentioned again.

Mrs. Roselle Jones then told an amusing story of the famous blue and white "put-it-here" china which had been hand-painted "to order" for the wife of a Nantucket captain. At her request Scripture passages were lettered in the center of each dish. However, upon its arrival in Nantucket, the set was found to be unusable since her careful instruction to "put it here" had been included at the end of each verse. The last known piece was found in use as a soap dish on a Polpis farm, and was taken to a home in West Medford. Later it was accidentally broken by a carpenter working in the house. Hearing this story, Mrs. Jones' father, Dr. Ellenwood Coleman, long looked for another piece of this unusual china but to no avail. It would be a rare collector's item.

The chairman's remark that the Quakers or Friends, in Nantucket from about 1700 to 1900, were not the original settlers, but formed "a firm heritage" of the Island, brought a series of Quaker stories from the panel.

Will Gardner noted that Quakers seldom spoke profanely even on board ship. He recalled the Quaker captain who "sailed with a good crew, except for Jack, who swore like a trouper". One day the captain called Jack aft, "Does thee know that thee is an inveterate swearer?" The sailor demurred that he "meant nothing by it". The good captain then ordered him to "take my coat and wear it for a week, and thee'll not be disposed to swear". At the end of the week Jack returned the coat. In answer to the Captain's inquiry he agreed that he had had "no desire to swear" but had had "a hankerlin' to lie".

This story reminded Mrs. Adams of the Quaker captain of a coasting vessel, frustrated in his attempts to dock at New York by an uncooperative Nova Scotia captain who refused to move. Whereupon the captain summoned a member of the crew, "Friend Peter, come up here and talk some of thy ill-advised language!" Handing him the speaking trumpet, the captain added, "And don't spare thyself, Peter".

To illustrate Quaker frugality "Eddie" Stackpole told about the wife of a skipper of a coastal vessel who decided to have a candy pull to surprise the children. The next night when the captain returned home, their son, awake upstairs, overheard his parents talking:

"Jonathan, does thee remember the barrel of molasses the rat fell in?"

"Yes."

"I have disposed of it."

A quaint Quaker story was told by Mrs. Adams. Visitors to the island applied for accommodations at a boarding house kept by Quakers, and were met with this reply: "Yes, we can take thee, but we shall be compelled to sleep thee in Coffin's. The tourists enjoyed the situation when the full meaning was grasped.

In introducing the topic of whaling, Chairman True briefly sketched the industry's early beginning in Nantucket, circa 1670, from land stations and tryworks on the beach. These were later transferred to shipboard as the search for whales took Nantucketers to all parts of the world.

Mr. Stackpole, noted authority on whaling, outlined a few of the many remarkable things about this industry. Voyages were two to three years long or even longer. This fact made the women of Nantucket outstanding; they were required to take care of business at home. Logbooks, kept by the mate, were often the "examination papers" by which he advanced to captain.

Perhaps the outstanding fact is the enterprise of the whalemens, "as much at home on sea as on land". These men had confidence, ability; they "invested in themselves", and they "give present Nantucketers something to think about. Nantucket was once the greatest whaling port in the world". Only 95 years ago, despite the fact that whaling had moved away from the Island and it was faced with depression, Nantucket whaling masters were in demand in other ports.

The fact that wives of some of the whaling captains frequently accompanied their husbands on long Pacific voyages was well illustrated by Mrs. Adams with stories of her grandmother. Soon after Captain Charles Grant, who has been acknowledged Nantucket's most successful whaling captain, arrived home in 1849 from a voyage in the "Walter Scott", his wife informed him, "If you go out again, you ship me, too". In August of that year they sailed together in the ship "Potomac", and in the following December their first child, Charles William Grant, was born at Pitcairn's Island, famous as the home of the mutineers of the "Bounty". Mrs. Grant with baby Charles went on the next voyage on the ship "Mohawk". A daughter, Eleanor, now 99 years old, was born at Bay of Islands, New Zealand, and later in the same voyage another son, George, the father of Mrs. Adams, was born at Apia, Island of Opolu, in the Samoan Islands. When Mrs. Grant rejoined the ship with baby George, she wrapped him in a banana leaf.

Dr. Gardner took this opportunity to question the veracity of the following George Grant story: The young seaman fell in love with a Nantucket girl who promised to marry him if he'd bring back a parrot that could recite the Lord's Prayer. Although this was a large order, George se-

cured a parrot in the tropic and took on the task despite the fact that "Forgive us our trespasses" almost stymied the bird. He even carved a beautiful scrimshaw cage. However, when he arrived at Cottage City near the end of the voyage a New Bedford man offered him one hundred dollars for the talented bird. When the offer reached \$250, George could no longer refuse, although he feared what his sweetheart might say. At length the young man returned to Nantucket with much trepidation. Upon inquiring about the young lady when he reached shore, he learned that she had married a man at Cottage City.



Mrs. Adams agreed that such a story did exist, then told another well known in the Grant family. As was customary, Capt. Charles Grant nailed a bounty, in this instance a twenty-dollar gold piece, to the mainmast with four copper tacks. This prize was to be earned by the first person on ship to sight a whale. Shortly afterwards, "Grandmother, hanging out clothes, sighted a whale, gave the traditional cry, and won the twenty-dollar gold piece". Mrs. Adams then demonstrated the call assisted by William H. Tripp, Curator of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, who was seated among the audience:

"Thar blo-ows."

"Where-away?"

"Two points off the starboard bow!"

Chairman True concluded the topic by summarizing the effect which the introduction of kerosene played in bringing about the decline of whaling.

Conversation then turned to the problems of Nantucket during times of war. The chairman stressed the fact that during the Revolutionary War, 1,600 Nantucket men were either captured, killed, or lost at sea, and that the War of 1812 brought similar problems. It is doubtful whether any other community of the times sacrificed one-third of its population.

Mrs. Adams and Mr. Stackpole discussed the part played by the three Rotch ships, the "Beaver", the "Dartmouth", and the "Eleanor", in the Boston Tea Party. Francis Rotch, then in London, arranged to take the cargo from the East India Company. Upon the tea's arrival in Boston all consignees refused it except Governor Hutchinson and some of his friends. Then followed the well-known meeting at Old South Church and the party of "Indians" at the wharf. With the exception of a broken hatch cover, not one of the vessels was harmed. Another famous Nantucket ship was the "Bedford", commanded by Captain William Mooer, which displayed the first American flag in a British port.

Mr. Jones, in defense of Nantucket's loyalty to the American cause, stated that 21 Nantucketers served on the "Bon Homme Richard" and the "Ranger" under John Paul Jones. However, he clearly pointed out that the Island was, by its very location between two fires. An active pro-American sympathy meant no food; therefore, an attitude of pro-British sympathy was expedient for existence.

The gam ended in a humorous vein with three anecdotes told by Mrs. King and Mrs. Adams. The first served to illustrate the uncertainty of mail service in the Pacific as evidenced by the following correspondence between a whaler and his wife:

"Dear Ezra, where did you put the axe?"

(Fourteen months later) "Dear Martha, what did you want the axe for?"

(Two years later) "Dear Ezra, never mind about the axe. What did you do with the hammer?"

The second grew out of the story of the wreck of the "H. P. Kirkham" bound from Halifax to New York with a cargo of dry and pickled fish which struck on Rose and Crowr Shoal in the evening on January 20, 1892. The rescue of the crew on the

following day is considered one of the most outstanding in the history of the Lifesaving Service. To Keeper Chase and to each of the rescuing crew was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. In later years George Lawly, a former summer resident living on the Cliff, hearing this story "down town" was greatly impressed. When he reached home that day he found Josiah B. Gould mowing the lawn. Mr. Lawly, after pacing back and forth across the lawn in the wake of the mower and recounting the story enthusiastically in great detail, climaxed his remarks with the question, "Don't you wish you'd been there?" "Si B." said, "I was". And he never missed a blade of grass, Mrs. King concluded triumphantly.

The final reminiscence, contributed by Mrs. Adams, concerned Benny Cleveland's advertisement, "I will sleep in the homes of timid women 15c each night—2 nights for a quarter."

The evening's entertainment concluded with a reading of the salty Obed Gardner will, by Mrs. H. Brooks Walker.

Refreshments were served by Mrs. Lewis S. Edgerton and her committee. Mrs. W. Ripley Nelson and Mrs. William Mather presided at the punch bowls. The committee included Mrs. Howard C. Barber, Mrs. Howard U. Chase, Mrs. C. Clark Coffin, Mrs. Henry B. Coleman, Mrs. Burnham N. Dell, Mrs. Oscar B. Eger, Mrs. Herbert W. Foye, Mrs. Richard V. Gray, Mrs. George W. Jones, Mrs. Joseph King, Mrs. William L. Mather, Mrs. W. Ripley Nelson, Mrs. James A. Norcross, Mrs. Cyril C. Ross, Mrs. C. L. Sibley, Mrs. Harry B. Turner, Mrs. Franklin F. Webster, and Miss Helen L. Winslow.

July 3, 1954

## Rich, Colorful And Droll Nantucket Yarns Unravelling At Historical League 'Gam'

What with television and Scrabble, conversation is becoming a lost art these days but as long as Nantucketers are able to get together for a "gam" it will never disappear entirely.

Bay State Historical league members who visited here recently were witnesses to a real Nantucket "gam" when Mrs. George Jones, Mrs. Joseph King, Mrs. Walton H. Adams, Dr. William E. Gardner, George Jones, Edouard Stackpole and Leroy H. True traded some old Nantucket stories.

The "gamming" tradition stretches way back to the early whaling days when passing ships would heave to and exchange news. The whaling ships have gone, but the tradition remains and when Islanders meet today they still call it "gamming."

The stories were rich and colorful, told in turn with whimsical and droll touches. Some samples:

The mail service was slow in the days of Nantucket's whaling glory and there were times when years would pass before a letter reached its destination. Despite the difficulties, one wife wrote to her sailor husband: "Dear Ezra Where did you put the axe?" More than a year later she received a letter saying: "Dear Martha, What did you want the axe for?" The wife hurriedly penned a reply and sent it on its way. Two years later the sailor read: "Dear Ezra. Never mind the axe. What did you do with the hammer." The story was told by Mrs. King.

Mrs. Adams told of an Island advertisement written by Benny Cleveland which read: "I will sleep in the homes of timid women, 15 cents each night—two nights for a quarter. She also remembered a story concerning a Quaker captain who was having a difficult time with a skipper from Nova Scotia. The argument became more heated and finally the Quaker called over one of the crew, Said the Quaker:

"Friend Peter, come up here and talk some of thy ill-advised language." As he handed the sailor his speaking trumpet, he advised: "And don't spare thyself, Peter."

Mr. Stackpole, Island historian and author of the Sea Hunters, made this contribution: In the old days a mate was often judged by the ship's owners on the way he kept the ship's log. If it was satisfactory he might be promoted to captain. One ambitious mate made the mistake of trying to drink Valparaiso dry, and when he finally lurched back to the ship the captain noted: "Mate came aboard drunk." When the mate argued that this would hurt his promotion chances the captain countered: "Well, it's true, isn't it?"

The mate said nothing and after a few days had passed, the captain had occasion to look over the log. To his amazement he found inscribed with each day's entry: "Captain sober to y." In answer to his demand for an explanation the mate said, "Wu, it's true, isn't it?"

Another story by Mrs. Jones concerned the wife of a Nantucket skipper who decided she'd have scriptural passages printed on her best china. The china was shipped off the Island along with instructions and in due time was returned. When the wife examined the china she found the biblical passages neatly printed and underneath the embazoned instructions: "Put it here."

Mr. Gardner remembered a story about a Quaker captain who tried to reform a member of his crew who it seems had a vocabulary rich with colorful expletives.

"Jack," said the captain one day, "Does thee know that thee is an inveterate swearer?" The sailor agreed but said he didn't mean any harm.

"Take my coat and wear it for a week," the captain said, "And thee'll find thee'll not be disposed to swear."

The week passed and Jack came back with the coat. "Well, Jack," said the captain, "Has thee stopped thy swearing?"

"I've had no desire to swear, captain," Jack answered, "But I've had a helluva hankerin' to lie."

Dr. Gardner doubted this story but it was supposed to have happened to Mrs. Adams' grandfather, George Grant: A sailor in love with a pretty Nantucket girl, he was told by the lass that she would marry him if he brought her a parrot that could recite the Lord's Prayer. It wasn't easy but George worked patiently with a bird he picked up in the tropics and soon the parrot was rattling off the prayer, stumbling only when he reached "Forgive us our trespasses."

Returning to Nantucket, George met a man in Cottage City who offered him \$100 for the parrot. George, thinking of his girl back in Nantucket, turned him down. But when the price was raised to \$250, he couldn't resist the offer and the bird changed hands.

Wondering what his girl would say, George arrived in Nantucket only to discover that she had married a man in Cottage City.

The Nantucket talent for barbed wit was shown in the story by Mrs. Jones of an old Quaker who advised an acquaintance: "Friend Charles, if thee'd be one half as economical of this world's goods, as thee is of the truth, thee'd be the richest man in Nantucket."

July 1954



### Nantucket "Gam" Enjoyed Wednesday Evening.

About a hundred people gathered at the Maria Mitchell Library on Vestal Street Wednesday evening for an informal "gam", sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association. The meeting was opened at 7:30 by Mrs. Walton H. Adams, who spoke a few words of welcome before introducing "Archie" Cartwright as chairman of the evening.

"Archie" was the ideal person for the job, since he is the last Nantucketer to have shipped out on a whaler. He said he was sorry not to see more Nantucket men in the gathering, but he guessed they'd make out all right with what they had. He called on Wallace Long to start things going and Mr. Long said he'd heard all kinds of stories in his day but he didn't want to be like old "Cap'n Zeb", who would talk a man to death and then whisper in his ear after he was dead, so he guessed he'd wait a while.

Cap'n Arthur McCleave was in good form, although we have a feeling that all the men present would have told some different stories if there hadn't been so many ladies in the group. As it was, he and Chairman "Archie" kept asking each other if it was "all right to tell" a certain story.

Mrs. Elkins Hutaff had two or three good tales about her great-grandparents.

Mrs. George Jones not only had a good memory but she had brought with her newspaper clippings and ads from the papers of the late '80's with several good stories about Cap'n Baxter coming to light as a result.

Cap'n McCleave and Mr. Cartwright together told of the rescue of a sloop bearing three ministers from Marblehead, with considerable "Shall I tell this one?" before they finished telling about a "rough trip".

Mrs. Amey questioned about the sign on the little building opposite her home on Gardner Street, which reads "Hose Cart No. 44". This brought out a discussion of the old fire engines and the use of village reels and leather hose.

The old stores on Main Street caused a lot of comment, particularly when the conversation strayed down "Petticoat Row" to Hannah Sheffield's old store.

And so it went, from Billy Bowen, to merry-go-rounds, to Edward W. Perry's coal yard ("Anybody comes out to steal coal on a night like this must need it."), to Dan Coffin who wasn't used to soap and water and died in less than a week after being given a bath at the poor house, to wrecks on Tuckernuck, the South Shore, and Coskata, etc.

Then "Archie" was prevailed upon to tell of his whaling cruise on the "Sunbeam" the story of which could easily have occupied a whole evening. The "Sunbeam" was 50 years old when "Archie" shipped out on her in 1906 under Cap'n McKenzie, but she was a good clean ship, and as good a whaler as they come. The food, however, was something else.

Wallace Long brought the evening to a close with a couple of stories about "Cap'n George Fred" and old Zeb Tilton, quoting the one as being "meaner than his other brother... meaner than the little end of nothing whittled down to a fine point."

The "gam" was over shortly after nine o'clock, but several people lingered on for more reminiscences. The stories were good, the speakers in top form, and memories were of the days when coffee was 28c a pound, and television unheard of.

Old tales of an era when Nantucketers went down to the sea in ships and when wrecks were a common sight on these Island shores were recalled by old timers at a lively old fashioned "gam" held at the Maria Mitchell Scientific Library Wednesday night.

Some 60 listeners were rollicked too by humorous anecdotes of residents in that era which follow the decline of Nantucket whaling. Fire Chief Archibald Cartwright, who once shipped aboard a whaler, and Captain Arthur McCleave, an elderly Nantucket salt, were among those who led speakers in recalling the Island past which exists no more.

It was the fourth such "gam" sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association.

Chief Cartwright, who also served as chairman of the "gam," gave a realistic account of life aboard a whaler, probably the only living Nantucketer who today can boast of the experience.

His first venture into the industry which made Nantucket the first whaling port of the world was at the age of 22. He shipped aboard the Sunbeam, a New Bedford whaler in 1906. Her master was Captain Joseph MacKenzie and she had been riding the waves for a half century.

As Chief Cartwright put it, he shipped as a "greenhorn" and carpenter. He was to be gone six months on the Sunbeam which netted 800 barrels of the prize whale oil on the voyage. And he was to leave her at Montevideo and board another whaler from that port before he returned home.

Before taking his audience that far, Chief Cartwright gave his listeners a sense of the feel of the Sunbeam—its crew, its food, its smells and life in general aboard a whaler.

It was a busy life but not bad, once you got used to it, the Sunbeam's Nantucket crewman recalled.

"There was always something to do aboard the ship, standing your watch and scrubbing," said the Fire Chief.

Chief Cartwright even conceded that you could get used to the food, bad at it was. And to give some idea of how bad it was, the cook kept his distance after each meal, never venturing forward to consort with the men he fed.

### Nantucketers Swap Tales Of Wrecks And Whales And Island Personalities At Gam

Salt horse, freshened in salt water, was on the menu three times a week. No gourmet dish, salt beef was far from a rarity, too, aboard the whaler. Chief Cartwright said they had it for dinner and supper three times a week.

By sharp contrast with today's American breakfast of juice, cereal, bacon and eggs and coffee, the Sunbeam's mates started their day off with cracker hash, an unappetizing dish of crackers soaked in water and fried.

Another Sunbeam dish was lob scouse, a pork concoction. Saturday night was treat night for the hard-working shipmates—gingerbread. And if you were at sea at Christmas you got plum duff.

But usually the dessert recipe wasn't anything the cook books carry. "It was made of skin and cores of fruit and had no flavor," was the way Chief Cartwright described it.

The former Sunbeam carpenter laid the blame squarely where it belonged. "He was a poor cook," said he.

In her food supply, the Sunbeam carried casks of hard tack, molasses and vinegar. Pure drinking water was an unheard of luxury aboard a whaler.

Chief Cartwright said the water was stored in oil casks, and was, as a result, tainted. In addition, the casks were a haven for cockroaches.

To purify the water for drinking purposes, charcoal was added to it.

Those were the days, too, when modern refrigeration was still a dream and Chief Cartwright tells of dumping casks of beef overboard because the meat had gone bad. At Montevideo, the ship replenished its dwindling food supply with fresh meat and potatoes.

And it was at Montevideo, Chief Cartwright recalled, that the Sunbeam's crew nearly mutinied when the master withheld permission for shore leave for a week.

It was not unusual for a wife to accompany a whaling master on his voyages. Captain McKenzie's wife was a member of the ship's company which made the voyage in 1906.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner, daughter of a Nantucket editor, who has amassed a large collection of Nantucket historical literature, exhibited a directory of Main Street with clippings and pictures of houses and stores of a by-gone era. Saying she had made it her hobby, Miss Gardner declared that the material and some 600 pictures of historic Main Street which she has collected will be turned over to the Nantucket Historical Association. She urged others having more to consult her.

In her contribution to the "gam" Miss Gardner recalled the numerous shipwrecks on Nantucket many years ago. At one time, she said, five ships were wrecked at Tuckernuck.

And Mrs. George Jones commented that the wrecks occurred when coastal shipping was at a peak. Vessels with wood cargoes from Maine and produce for various ports passed by the Island, then a dangerous graveyard for ships, because of shoals. Chief Cartwright recalled he once counted 80 vessels in the bay at one time.

The gam recalled memories of the first phonograph on the Island and of the time when one could wade from Smith's Point to Tuckernuck Island.

Mrs. Jones read old newspaper advertisements which offered coffee, tea, sugar and butter at a fraction of the cost of those items today.

Wit of oldtime Nantucketers was cited and illustrated with stories by Mrs. Elkins Hutaff, Wallace Long, Mrs. Walton Adams and Mrs. Jones.

Captain McCleave amused the gathering with humorous stories including one relating to the late Hannah Sheffield, a Petticoat Row merchant, and the other dealing with the rescue of three ministers who foundered off Nantucket.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1954

Feb. 17, 1954



## Tales of Historic Nantucket Retold at Winter "Gam".

The Maria Mitchell Library was the scene of another in the popular series of "Winter Gams", sponsored by the Nantucket Historical Association, Thursday evening, February 17. This was the fourth in a series of winter gams at which the President Mrs. Nancy Adams presided. In spite of bad weather and many other public gatherings taking place, there were about 60 persons present. Mrs. Adams expressed appreciation for so many coming out on such a disagreeable night, and welcomed them all in behalf of the Nantucket Historical Association.

"I'm sure you enjoy, as I do, getting together to talk over old Nantucket days. Some of us feel very young, but we are the old folks, and like to reminisce. Longevity is typical of Nantucket," continued Mrs. Adams.

"When my grandfather, Captain Charles Grant, was captain of the whaleship 'Mohawk', he was accompanied by my grandmother. They put into port at Russell, Bay of Islands, New Zealand, and there on February 25, 1855, a little girl was born. Next week on the 25th I expect to go to New Bedford to the celebration of the 100th birthday of that baby. Talk about longevity!

"We now are going to have a pleasant evening, we hope, just talking over old times. There used to be a store here on the island," remembered Mrs. Adams, "kept by Anne Tustin where pickled beans were sold. When this store was closed up finally, a small boy was given the chance to take anything he wanted from the store. He chose the 'reel of string' which he thought could be used for fish lines and other strings. In later years this reel came to the Nantucket Historical Association and here it is. Now, let's reel off some stories."

Mrs. George Jones was called upon to set the reel rolling. Her story concerned Graftin Gardner who used to sell pickled eels' feet.

Mrs. Elkins Huttaff read a letter about a trip to New York in 1852 on the "Old Fall River Line."

Mrs. Jones showed a periodical called "American Heritage" in which were pictures of the steamers of the Fall River Line.

Mrs. Charlotte King read from a scrap book a clipping about the Nantucket steamboat running to Hyannis four times a week in the year 1872.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner had in her possession a program of the graduating class of 1897 and read the list of graduates, one of whom was present at the gam, Mrs. Mary L. Gouin. Miss Gardner then read the menu which was used at the Centennial Supper held at one of the hotels. This consisted of soup, boiled swordfish, every kind of roast meat, and ended with ice cream.

Mrs. Kent King then told a story about an old time character.

Mrs. Jones showed a picture of the old Nantucket Hotel on Brant Point and told of a dinner held there for the Coffin School. This hotel was later moved and while being moved, a Northeast storm came up. Mrs. Jones recalls seeing the horses going round and round the capstan. One section of this hotel is the present Red Men's Building (Dreamland Theatre).

Mrs. Adams read a clipping about an old bath tub in the basement kitchen of Captain Owen Chase's house on the northeast corner of

Orange and York Streets as far back as 1868. Captain Chase was a large man and the tub, built of tin, was made large in proportion with a frame of wood. It seems a leader was put through the window near the tub through which water was led into the tub from a pump in the yard. Captain Chase would pump as much water into the tub as he thought he needed for his bath, then would light a fire under the tub and thus bring the water up to the required temperature. There must have been a brick hearth under the tub, but imagine the smoke pouring out into the room! And to empty the tub the water must have been bailed out.

Mrs. Charlotte King read a clipping about some of the old hotels on the island, and prices being \$2.50 a day. The Veranda and the Wauwinet House were the best locations on the island.

A list of the old hotels was read by Mrs. Adams, among them were Dixon's Tavern, on Cross Wharf; Wheeler's Tavern, corner of South Wharf and Whale Street; Sailor Boarding House, Old South Wharf; Washington House, Main Street; Mansion House, Federal Street, and Atlantic House, Siasconset. These hotels were all "before the fire".

Mr. Jones read an article about old fire apparatus, following which Mrs. King and Mrs. Adams both read clippings about old fire engines and where they were located.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner told a story about the undertaker attending a funeral in his best black attire, and then having to go to a fire all dressed up for a funeral.

Mr. Clinton Andrews read an item from a scrap book about fishing and an ice storm in 1888. The ice being twelve inches thick and one could skate from Tuckernuck to Madaket.

Mrs. Frank Conway told a very interesting story about a voyage on which her mother and her two children accompanied Capt. Conway, telling about how many days she was seasick; 63 out of 168 days she was suffering from seasickness. Mrs. Conway made the story interesting.

Mr. Reuben Glidden was called on to tell a story, and he told about old Joe Clapp and his friend Thomas Sayer. These two made an agreement that if one went before the other, the remaining pal would visit the cemetery once a month to report the doings of the island. Mr. Sayer died first and Joseph Clapp made his periodical visits to the cemetery and on one of these visits he told the happenings on the island and said, "If you are contented where you are, I think you had better stay there."

Also Mr. Glidden recited a few epitaphs which can be found in the old burying grounds, one of which runs like this: "However dear, she's laid not here; Some private grief was her disease, Laid to the North, her friends to please."

Another one was: "Here lies the body of Samuel Pease with folded arms he went to ease. It is not Sam, but only his pod, Sam has shelled out and gone to God."

Mr. Glidden added a story about Dr. Jenks, the dentist, who would pull a tooth for 50 cents.

Mr. Kent King read an article from California Monthly magazine by Ferdinand Ewer about a reunion of Nantucket people in California.

Mr. Glidden then recited a long poem. Mrs. Charlotte King read a clipping about schools in Nantucket, while Mr. George Jones read some interesting items from "Godfrey's Guide to Nantucket".

Mrs. Adams spoke about the building of the Summer Street Baptist Church, and about how cheap labor and materials were. One item was "paid Caleb C. Cook of Providence \$19 for mahogany and carting and for labor; Hiram Andrews received \$5 for labor; Lot Fisher \$13; Steven Eston \$3; Alexander M. Adams \$10; Joseph Ramsdell 50 cents for hoisting rafters, and Jessie Eldridge \$4." The church was built in 1840.

Mr. Jones then told about old time auctions and some stories about Billy Clark. There was a saying: "No person, if he has anything to do at all, can afford to attend an auction."

Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson told an entertaining story about the old 'Sconset train. Mr. Powers of the popular hotel of the day used to blow a bugle upon the arrival and departure of guests at the hotel. One of his favorite tunes was "Why Did I Ever Leave Thee?"

Mrs. Adams spoke about the old pump which used to be in the yard hidden behind the board fence on the Joy property. Later the house was removed from this property and Dr. J. S. Grouard built a new home at the corner of Cliff Road and Easton Street.

Mrs. King read a story from the Pioneer magazine which was very entertaining.

This ended the "Gam" for this year. All who attended expressed enjoyment of the evening's entertainment.

Feb. 26, 1955

## MORNING, MARCH 3, 1956

### Old Favorite Nantucket Stories Feature "Winter Gam".

A goodly number of people filled the library of the Maria Mitchell Association on Friday evening, February 17, when Mrs. Walton Adams, president of the Nantucket Historical Association, called to order the annual "winter gam", sponsored by the Association.

After greeting the gathering, Mrs. Adams turned the meeting over to Mr. George Jones, chairman for the evening. Mr. Jones stated that the evening was to be most informal, but the plan was to conduct the gam in a somewhat chronological order, starting with the year 1900. For the next hour and a half, anecdotes and stories pertaining to Nantucket during the past 50 years, mostly old favorites to Nantucketers but no less appreciated because of their familiarity. As is usually the case in an evening of this kind, too few of those present joined in the "gam" actively, some of the best storytellers were missing, and the task of "keeping the ball rolling" fell on the shoulders of two or three people.

The manufacturing of ice at John Killen's plant on Straight Wharf proved an interesting subject for it brought forth memories from Captain Arthur McCleave with regard to cutting seven-inch ice from Nantucket ponds and storing it in sawdust for future use.

The discussion about cutting ice from the ponds was followed by that of the old-fashioned freeze-ups, the famous one in 1905 which lasted from February 2 to the 25th provoking remarks that winters now-a-days aren't like those of 50 years ago. Mention of the old Nantucket Railroad by Mr. Jones brought forth a story from Norman Giffin about how Tom Galvin, of the Boston florist business, had guests coming to visit him in 'Sconset. They had wired ahead for "parlor car accommodations", but when they saw the train, they refused to ride on it.

The beginning of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital in 1911, the old steamers "Uncatena" and "Sankaty", and the schools in Polpis and on Tuckernuck brought forth "do you remember" from several of those present, most of them relating to the various teachers responsible for instilling the minds of young Nantucketers with their three "r's". Mrs. George Jones told how young Mary Valentine was late to school one morning and, in her haste to gain her seat, left the door open. When asked by her teacher if there were any doors in her house, she answered, "Yes, seven in the kitchen", and kept right on going.

The story of the German submarine "Deutschland", which appeared in The Inquirer and Mirror in January, 1916, five months before the coming of the submarine to the east coast of the United States was brought up by Mr. Jones. The island newspaper was ridiculed for its story which was later praised by the city newspapers, which had been "scooped" by the Nantucket editor. Mr. Clinton Andrews mentioned the small submarine which had tied up at the Island Service dock during the 1920's as being the only one he remembered.

Mr. Norman Giffin remembered back, in the first days of street lights, when they didn't light the street lights on the nights when there was a full moon. Then, with a little prompting on the part of Mr. Jones, he told of the first trip, made by him and Captain Adolph Rohdin, in a Ford car across the Haulover to Great Point. The trip was made in January, in an open pick-up truck, when the temperature registered a mere 13 degrees above zero.

The subject of earthquakes on Nantucket brought forth the fact from Miss Margaret Harwood that there was one on February 28, 1925, when pictures and china rattled and fell from their accustomed places.

With the statement by Mr. George Burgess, that teachers like the late Ellen Cox and Anne Ring were now only memories and if there were teachers like them today "we could dispense with all the teacher trouble", the fifth Nantucket "gam" came to a close, although several of those attending lingered a while for more reminiscences of the by-gone days.

1956



## "Transportation" Lively Topic At Annual "Gam".

A capacity audience gathered in the Maria Mitchell Library Wednesday evening to enjoy the annual discussion and hear the many anecdotes of days gone by but lingering long in the memory of all Nantucketers.

Mr. George Jones, president of the Nantucket Historical Association, presided and introduced Mr. Norman Giffin who led the discussion and told many entertaining stories of incidents which had occurred during his years associated with the various means of travel to and from the Island especially the travel by boat. Because of his years of close contact with the ways by which people can come to and leave the Island he suggested "Transportation" as the topic of the evening and the discussion did center on this subject.

Inquiring as to how many of the audience had traveled on the old Siasconset Railroad there was an enthusiastic showing of hands indicating that well over half of the audience had had familiar association with the railroad which ended its days in 1917 and thereafter was sent to France as a part of America's World War One contribution to allied effort.

Mr. Ripley Nelson started the evening's discussion with a letter received from Mr. Bassett Jones relating a personal experience of his which had occurred in 1917. The story was graphically written and greatly appreciated by the audience. Mr. Jones told, in part, of attempting to "catch" the boat at Steamboat Wharf from Wauwinet. It came about that the farm team proved to be the last-resort means of transportation which he was forced to use.

The old man driving the team rattled along with Mr. Jones attempting to change to city clothes in the cart. Unfortunately, at the junction of the highway and the railroad, near Polpis, the train appeared going in the same direction, and to "catch" the boat. This, of course, was a challenge to the teamster that couldn't be ignored.

The race that ensued was both rocky and wild, ended fatally for the driver of the team, who was thrown from the cart, and nearly so for Mr. Jones, who, battered and bruised, his city clothing torn and useless, did make the boat and eventually reached his destination, New York.

The railroad, which was in active service from 1897 to 1917, was a source of many amusing tales. Mr. Jones related one incident when wags suggested greasing the tracks near Tom Nevers Head. It was hardly sooner suggested than done. The train started up the grade only to roll back, the passengers and trainmen wondering what could be the trouble. And it was not until the fourth try that the trainmen thought of grease and applied sand.

Mrs. Seddon Legg related that it was on this very trip of the greased rails that a young couple had decided to elope from Siasconset but the train missed the boat and the elopement was off.

Mrs. Rozelle Jones, Mrs. Herbert Foye, and others of the audience had copies of The Inquirer and Mirror,

dated prior to 1917, which had interesting advertisements and time tables of the train service. In 1913, the operator of the railroad promised the summer visitors first class service which he knew they would appreciate, and a round trip from Nantucket to Siasconset for 60 cents.

The old Ocean View House proprietor, Dr. Powers, who played a bugle, was described by Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson. Dr. Powers stood at the top of the steps above the train platform and welcomed all incoming trains with a jaunty tune on his bugle so that everyone felt gay and pleased. He also entertained wherever there was a departing guest. It goes without saying the whole population of Sconset turned out to meet all incoming and outgoing trains. With all gathered, waving departures, Dr. Powers brought out his bugle and played the sad, lingering notes of "How Can I Ever Leave Thee." Needless to say handkerchiefs flourished.

Mr. Giffin related that when he was a very small child it was frequently his chore to run to the boat with letters for the mail. This was more a pleasure than chore for everyone turned out to see the boat off.

One day, when a good crowd gathered, one of the older, well-known residents drove up in his closed carriage, his horses high stepping, with great flourish, for his daughter has just been married and the crowd watched hopefully expecting to see the happy couple step out and go up the gang plank starting their honeymoon. But the gentleman walked about the carriage, ceremoniously opened the door and that was all—no one was in the carriage! It seems the young couple had gone to Madaket on their honeymoon.

There were many tales told of the steamboats and side wheelers which kept Nantucket in communication with America over the long years—the "River Queen," the "Island Home," the "Gay Head," "Martha's Vineyard", and others. There were reports of the round trips on the old Fall River Line from New York. Tickets were eight dollars and were good from June 1 to November 1. There were excursions from Boston advertised extensively from the year 1860 nearly to the present! But before 1917 the round trip was four dollars.

In the earlier days the wind seemed to blow more furiously, and the ocean rolled more tempestuously, for all present who had taken passage on the boats many times reported the wild rocking of the boats, the loud creaking and groaning of the timbers as the ships pitched and righted on the long ride from Woods Hole.

Miss Margaret Harwood reported vividly an experience she had during one "freeze-up." The boat "Sankaty" was frozen in the harbor for eight days in January, 1918. Miss Harwood and several teachers who had been in Boston were trying to return to the Island. They finally received word that the boat would be making the trip from Woods Hole. They got the train in Boston at 6 a.m. and the boat did leave Woods Hole but only got to Vineyard Haven. They rode to the Vineyard and back to Woods Hole all in one day and another day from 6:30 in the morning until 5:30 in the evening they rode the turbulent icy waters to Nantucket, in a boat with no heat, walking miles about the boat to keep warm!

Many other "freeze-ups" were reported when there was no food or mail brought to the Island for many days. One grocery store with a few Nantucket turnips left in stock advertised that "when the boat comes in we will have . . ." this was followed by the long list of items usually found on the shelves.

Mr. Giffin read an excerpt from the book "Story of the Island Steamers," by H. B. Turner, published in 1911, describing in detail the experiences of crew and passengers of the "Island Home" when it was stuck in the mud flats off Tuckermuck Island in a fierce snow storm for four days in February, 1882. None expected to survive the experience but one passenger still lives here on Nantucket. All reached the Island safely.

Mr. Giffin told of the woman who had a ticket for Nantucket and when the boat pulled into port at Martha's Vineyard the weather was so severe the captain decided to stay in port. The passengers were asked to leave the boat but this one passenger would only show her ticket for Nantucket, stating firmly she would not leave the boat until she reached there. Thus the crew had a roomer and boarder for the three days the weather permitted no trip to the Far Away Island!

He related, too, the story of the bewildered girl who, debarking at Nantucket, stood on the wharf looking about anxiously, finally asked when the bus arrived. It developed she wished to take a bus to Providence, R. I.

A member of the audience told of the honeymoon couple who came to the Island. The young wife did not care for the steamer trip and informed her husband that she intended to return by train however he might go!

The horse and buggy days came in for a rare collection of tales and many of the old newspapers had amusing and interesting items regarding the many stables, the "three seaters" to rent with reliable horses to draw them. Those who liked to ride on a gentle, serene horse, or one with a little ginger and go! There were not only horses and carriages for all suitable occasions from clam bakes to funerals but there were hats and coats to rent to befit the occasion also, so that one need not ride to a funeral or wedding in the proper carriage without the correct hat or bonnet to dignify the event.

Mr. Bartlett pointed out that at one time there were many farms in the Polpis area and horses were numerous, as many as 600 horses on the Island during the summer months. One of the pastimes of the younger fry, in the horse and buggy days, was going to the boat to watch the horses walk the gang plank, and indeed this recreation had its moments for one horse did fall into the harbor.

The horse-cars, and the stage coaches also supplied their share of the evening's interest, the former being more transient than the latter which made round trips to Sconset for five dollars! More expensive than going to Boston but twice the fun.

Mention was made of Corn Pond—just bathe there and the next day your corns will be gone, and several episodes of Captain Baxter's were related to the enjoyment of all.

On this note of wit at the expense of no one for the enjoyment of all the pleasant meeting was adjourned.

A. P. R.

Mar, 2, 1957



## Rollicking Tales Of Island's Transport Era Told At Historical Association Gam

"Nobody can realize how sentimental we were in Sconset in those days," Margaret Fawcett Wilson reminisced. "Everyone used to go down to the station to see the people off, whether we knew them or not. One man came back to the hotel after train time and sobbed to his wife, 'They've gone?' Curious, she asked who'd gone. 'Oh, I don't know who, but they're gone, they're gone.'"

The occasion for retrospect was the Historical Association's annual "gam" held last Wednesday evening at the Maria Mitchell library. Master of ceremonies Norman Giffin, after being introduced by Association President George Jones, announced the topic of the evening's yarning was "Transportation". The Sconset Express provoked merry recollections and a tragic one from the gathering. More than half of the fifty people present had once ridden the Express.

W. Ripley Nelson quoted a letter sent to him after last year's gam by Bassett Jones, the sole survivor of the fatal accident. Mr. Jones had hired a horse cart to take him from Wauwinet to the station, so he could catch the Express, and get into town to take the early boat. He was changing to town clothes in the cart when he heard the train whistle. The driver raced his horse to beat the train to the crossing, but both vehicles reached the junction simultaneously. Mr. Jones was thrown clear in the collision, but the driver was killed. Jones took the Express to town after seeing there was nothing he could do for the driver, and made the boat. He was given a rubdown by a mate who was a self-styled masseur, and managed to walk off the boat, although he was bruised from head to heel.

The dead driver was given burial by James Backus, who then was faced with three women claiming to be the widow.

Mr. Jones recalled some young bloods who wanted to speed up the Express, and greased the tracks along the grade near Tom Nevers. The early train going back to town to meet the first boat, couldn't make it up the incline, until passengers helped sand the tracks.

Mention of the early boats, the Monohansett, the Uncatena, the River Queen, the Island Home, and the Martha's Vineyard, evoked a flood of yarns. Many remembered Willie Smith, a purser whose idea of a joke was to have visitors on board and slip the boat free of the wharf without their knowledge.

When he was in the sixth grade, Mr. Jones and his class went to meet the boat. Catalpa tree plants were being given to every child

who came. The trees were meant to be planted on Arbor Day, but more were planted in the harbor than were ever set out.

Mrs. Jones had located an old ad for excursion tickets, on sale at the Old Colony wharf in New York. The fare to Nantucket was \$8 round trip, and tickets were good until Nov. 1. Hotel rooms, the ad went on, were available from \$1.50 to \$3.00. Mr. Giffin said his first wages for the steamboat company were \$8.10 a week, and \$9.55 when they worked Sundays. His first Summer he saved \$100 but the next year he had a girl, and saved only \$35.

The sloop "Dartmouth" used to leave North Wharf every hour for the bathing beaches, according to Mrs. Jones' records, and charged ten cents. Miss Grace Brown Gardner said there were over 100 "coasters" plying between Nantucket and the mainland in the Summertime, available for excursion or shuttling.

During the freeze-up of January, 1918, Miss Margaret Harwood was caught on the mainland, along with several teachers who spent the holidays at home. The Sankaty had been frozen into the harbor here, and the Uncatena was waiting in Boston for clearing waters. At 6 a. m. one day the boat plus teachers and Miss Harwood, set forth and made the Vineyard. While the hands were unloading freight, the "starved" girls raced uptown, and ordered oyster stew. They had paid for it, but hadn't had a chance to taste it when the boat whistle blew. Most of the day they shuttled back and forth to the Vineyard, Miss Harwood buying yeast cakes at every stop because word was that the Island supply was short. After spending the night at Martha's Vineyard, the girls boarded the boat at 6:30 a. m. The steamer backed and bucked ice from the lightship and finally made harbor at 5:30 p. m.

The Uncatena, being a side wheeler, made a wide swath in the ice, freeing the Sankaty. It had been frozen in for three weeks, and it was six days before another boat came in.

Mr. Giffin quoted an 1857 diary when there were only two mails out between January 5 and February 6, and 31 were sent out the third day. During this spell, a freighter from Glasgow was grounded near Squam. Ninety tons of coal were taken from Nantucket to Sconset, then by dory out to the boat. Not all passengers wanted more than one steamer ride.

One Thanksgiving a Nantucket boy brought his bride home to meet his folks, yarned Mr. Giffin. It came time for them to leave. The husband said they'd better get down to the wharf to catch the boat, but the wife insisted she was going by train.

Mrs. Wilson recollected that Captain Sandsbury's wife would tell by the sound of the whistle whether her husband was coming straight home or if he was going to stop in town first.

John Donnelly, an Edgartown agent, was a good mate when he was sober, but Mr. Giffin said that was why his wife did most of the work. One day John surprised her with a lovely bouquet. She surprised him when she learned he'd lifted it from a corpse.

Mr. Nelson recalled ferrying in via seaplane from a Hudson River landing. He never knew whether they were going over or under the Brooklyn Bridge.

In early days there were also many livery stables who hired hacks for weddings and funerals. Mrs. Jones quoted one hack driver at a funeral who had overheard his two female passengers saying "Ain't we having a fine ride! But we won't have another like it till Pa goes."

Mar. 1, 1957



## 1958 Annual Winter Gam Held at Maria Mitchell. *Continued from Page One*

lustre ware pitcher which his grandmother, Mary Hussey Gardner, had set out on the front steps each morning, with a two-cent piece carefully placed inside, for the milk which would be poured from the milkman's can. The remaining two cent piece was dated 1851. The tiny cover of the pitcher is still intact.

Each package was then held up to view and the owner requested to unwrap the contents and give the legend of the article.

Mrs. George A. Folger opened a set of eight apothecary's weights which were made in France, probably in the early 1800's. These weights, perfectly graduated, all fitted into the largest which covered and enclosed them securely. Mrs. Wallace Long unwrapped a carefully inlaid, wooden box which had held the personal papers of Captain George Pollard who was master of the whaling ship "Essex" which was sunk by an angry whale in 1820. Captain Pollard was one of five who survived after drifting for 93 days and enduring unimaginable hardships.

Mrs. Harold Page, having no possession from Nantucket's past, brought a prize from her own early childhood when she had learned to sew a fine seam, and held up for inspection a very serviceable pair of doll's pants with infinitesimal stitches and lace trimming which had taken her a full year to produce.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner gave a delightful story with the painting of her grandmother's home which was located in "Egypt." The painting had been given to Miss Brown's mother by the painter, the famous Walter Folger. Miss Gardner also held up to view the small lantern which her grandmother had carried until her death at 99. Especially had she carried the lantern when visiting her old home in "Egypt."

Mrs. George Jones opened a large and beautifully painted Chinese tea caddy which was brought from China by her grandfather, Captain Henry Coleman, who mastered the famous ship "Howqua" out of New York in 1855. Captain Coleman's wife and two sons accompanied him on this voyage of 126 days to China and 130 days returning! The "Howqua" was named for a Chinese who had been appointed by the Emperor to engage in trade with the West. He became fabulously wealthy, and was highly respected both in China and this country. His name is closely associated with Nantucket's whaling days. The ship "Howqua" eventually went to the "Port of Missing Ships" but the tea caddy remains intact with lovely gold and black designs, and containing two compartments large enough to hold a vast amount of tea.

Mrs. Alice Shurrocks' grandfather, James Austin, once had a tin shop on Main Street. When her mother was a little girl he made an expertly finished tiny tin scoop for her. Mrs. Shurrocks brought this scoop which had inspired some of the incidents in her book, "Two Steps Down."

Mr. Norman Giffin's grandfather, Captain Joseph P. Nye, sailed, with his bride, on the ship "Alto," from Fairhaven, on an Atlantic whaling voyage in 1864. While on this voyage, Captain Nye, in company with another whaler, rescued the crew from the British ship "Wigtonshire" which was destroyed by fire at sea.

In 1866 Her Majesty's Government presented to Captain Nye (and the captain of the other whaling vessel) a fine sextant most adequately boxed. Mr. Giffin brought this sextant and a copy of the presentation letter from Her Majesty.

Mrs. James Hammond brought and demonstrated the unusual tone of a small temple gong from India which she had gotten in Turkey. This gong is perhaps 1,500 years old, and still has its tone!

Mrs. Charlotte King brought the sewing kit which had been given to her grandmother, Mary Harris Riddell, by her father, Timothy, in 1851, when she was 12 years old. The kit is a group of small drawers placed on top of one another somewhat in the fashion of a Chinese temple, with a covered container for spools of thread which has bone or ivory eyelets, and topping all an embroidered pin cushion.

Mr. Robert Caldwell unwrapped and held up to view a singularly beautiful porringer, probably a Benjamin Bunker work of art, similar to those Mr. Everett U. Crosby pictured in his book, "Books and Baskets, Signs and Silver of Old-Time Nantucket." This porringer was originally owned by Edward and Lydia Carey, who were the first family of this name on the Island, in 1738. Since that date it has been handed down to direct descendants of the Carey family.

Mrs. Margaret Fawcett Wilson showed a small, attractive card case which was owned by the renowned actress, Mrs. G. H. Gilbert, who was, for many years, a frequent guest of Mrs. Wilson's parents in "Sconset." Mrs. Wilson showed a pair of antique ear rings which her mother wore when she played with Otis Skinner in the "Honor of the Family."

Mrs. Nancy Adams held up to view her most precious piece of scrimshaw, a tiny and most artfully made pen-knife with a handle of whale bone carved into a perfect leg and slippered foot.

Mrs. G. E. Huttaff brought the long chain and scissors, the "housewife" which had belonged to her great-grandmother, Susan Burnell Elkins, having been given to Susan by her father, Jonathan Burnell, who was lost at sea in 1783. It has belonged to direct descendants of Susan since then.

Mrs. Alice P. Amey had for all to view the cameo which Maria Mitchell had cut while in Rome in 1857. The cameo is the "Quaker" head of Mrs. Amey's great-grandmother, and Maria Mitchell's mother, Mrs. William Mitchell. This large, unique cameo is probably the only one of its kind, a most unusual and precious piece. Mrs. Molly Norcross showed the lovely sterling silver card case which belonged to her great-grandmother, Sarah Allen, who married William Starbuck and lived in the Lower Brick. Miss Marjorie Barrett exhibited the very appealing portrait of her grandfather, Josiah Barrett, which was painted by Phoebe Fitzgerald Barney. It is a tiny portrait in colors on a light background and has a charm of its own.

Saying she had searched unsuccessfully for a Nantucket ancestor, Miss Gladys Wood brought two enticing silhouettes, a gentleman who could easily have been a most affluent Nantucket merchant, and a demure but firm lady, who could have been his capable wife.

Mrs. Mary L. Gouin brought a lovely old watch, large, with a key to wind, and a chain to match, which might have been made from California gold, and was the property of

Mary Anne Chase who died at the age of 77 in 1917.

Mr. Warner White brought to the gam several beautiful samples of lace which he had purchased in France during a stay there in 1918. These exquisite laces can hardly be duplicated today as the art of making them has nearly ceased to exist.

Mrs. Norman Giffin showed a tiny but perfect silver spoon and told the story which follows the spoon through their family. Mr. Giffin's grandmother had been promised a silver spoon for her first born but when the baby arrived the family finances were low. However, her husband, not to fail in his promise, presented her with the miniature spoon which has become a family heirloom.

Mr. John Bartlett produced the second piece of scrimshaw of the evening; a carved whale's tooth which had come to him through his mother who was a Hussey and whose ancestors had been whalers.

As Dr. Gardner commented at this point, it was surprising to see only two pieces of scrimshaw among a collection of Nantucketers' possessions, for, as everyone is aware, Nantucket houses abound with examples of this special art of the whaling days.

Miss Margaret Harwood read short excerpts from the private correspondence of Miss Maria Mitchell which were both amusing and illuminating.

Mr. George Jones showed colored snapshots of a large banjo clock, a fine clock with brass pendulum, decoratively painted in gold with striking colored designs, which has been in his family for six generations. This came to Mr. Jones' notice first when he was four years old, when it hung over the mantel of his grandfather's living room in the house at the corner of Plumb Lane and Orange Street. Asa Jones handed the clock down to his son, and then it came directly to the present owner. Mr. Jones also had colored snaps of a beautiful old "grandfather" clock which was built during the Revolution (1775) when brass was very scarce and the plates which hold the works are made from many pieces of brass so carefully dovetailed the clock keeps accurate time to this day.

This was the last of the planned presentation of precious possessions and Dr. Gardner inquired if there were further articles which would be of interest to all those present, and there were—several fascinating articles. These were held to view with enthusiasm and examined with keen interest.

Mrs. Amey showed the beautiful gold pen with jeweled cap and long chain, which belonged to Maria Mitchell, is dated 1856, and was used by Miss Helen Wright when she autographed copies of her book, "Sweeper in the Sky."

Mrs. Charlotte King held up for all to see the gold ring set with a sapphire given to Mrs. Walter N. Chase (wife of Captain Chase who was keeper of the Coskata Life Saving Station) by the Captain of the "Western Belle" in 1890. Captain Chase assisted the "Western Belle" when she was in trouble and was offered extra remuneration for the service. This he refused as he felt the assistance was given in line of duty. Then the captain of the "Western Belle" asked permission to give Mrs. Chase a small gift. Permission was granted and Mrs. Chase received the gold ring from the captain. Later there was some chagrin on the part of the good Cap-

tain Chase when an article appeared in the Boston papers giving an account of the "Western Belle" which had come from Singapore with smuggled jewelry aboard!

With thanks and applause to Dr. Gardner for a most enjoyable and entertaining gam, and sincere thanks to the librarian, Mrs. Norcross, of the Maria Mitchell Association for the use of their pleasant rooms, President Jones closed the 1958 Gam with all persons present satisfied they had never attended a more interesting and enjoyable gam session.

A. P. R.

## 1958 Annual Winter Gam Held at Maria Mitchell.

On Friday evening, February 28, 1958, more than 60 persons gathered in the Maria Mitchell Library on Vestal Street to attend the ninth "Gam" presented by the Nantucket Historical Association. Dr. Will E. Gardner, beloved by all Nantucketers, old and young alike, and by those "off-islanders" who have had the privilege of his acquaintance, presided over this Gam in his inimitable manner as he did over the Historical Association's first Gam which was held in 1943.

Introduced by the president of the Association, Mr. George W. Jones, Dr. Gardner said if one searches the dictionary for a meaning of the word "Gam" its origin is uncertain and meaning vague, but his grandfather told him, when he was very young, that "Gam" was derived from the gamboling of the whale in the South Pacific; hence a gam was talking (or frisking) of whales! The whales were doubtless courting and here at the gam we court tales of the whaling days. Thus the meeting opened in a happy mood as Dr. Gardner stood before a table loaded with well-wrapped mystery packages which he had requested all those interested to bring. More than 25 persons did bring a prize possession with a historical legend.



# 7th ANNUAL GAM

NANTUCKET HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28 - 7:30 p.m.

at Maria Mitchell Library, Vestal Street

Public Invited

"A Priceless Portable Possession From My Home"

Bring anything relative to subject, concealed in wrapping.

Notify: Dr. William E. Gardner, chairman, Tel. 1216.

1958



## Nantucket Historic Association 'Gam' Features Exhibition Of Old Silver

By Isabel Veit

The Nantucket Historical Association featured an exhibition of old silver, at a gam, last Friday evening at the Maria Mitchell Library on Vestal Street.

George W. Jones presided in the absence of Dr. William Gardner. With the able assistance of a committee comprised of Mrs. George A. Folger, Miss Cora Stevens, Mrs. Joseph King and Mrs. George W. Jones, there was an exceptional exhibit.

Nantucket silversmiths were discussed and works of Benjamin Bunker (1751-1842), George Cannon, (1767-1835), J. E. Easton, (1807-1903), E. J. Kelly and Easton and Sanford about 1830, were displayed.

History-wise, the members are well versed on the names and dates of the Nantucket Illustrious, and the silversmiths whose handiwork has been assiduously preserved. The gam was like a touch of Aladdin's lamp, only a silver spoon held the magic. Had they met in a room lit by nothing but the light of a drift wood fire, the corners of the room would have been crowded with the ghosts of Gardners, Coffins, Folgers Brooks, Husseys, the Mitchell sisters, and many, many more. Proud ghosts they'd be, too. And smiling. The beautiful silver is a tribute to the custodians. Lovely! Lovely!

The choice displays were records of betrothals, weddings, and birthings of early Nantucketers.

Spooning, which has been so often heard in song and in story must have had its origin in these early times when an engagement to marry was sealed with the gift of a silver spoon, on which were inscribed the initials of the proud couple.

A sad story was attached to a pair of salt spoons made by Pitman shown by Mrs. George Folger. Engraved thereon were the initials of the betrothed. But the wedding never took place. Capsized while sailing off Tuckernuck, the young man bravely brought his fiancée to shore, but she succumbed, the ordeal having been too much for her.

A silver porringer of 1847 belonging to Gertrude King, and a pap spoon of 1790 of Mrs. Grace Elkins Huttaff belonging to her great, great grandmother were also shown by Mrs. Folger.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner had some interesting pieces to show. A silver snuff box bearing the inscription, "A pinch of this is worth a kiss". A silver medal presented in 1834 by the School Committee, to her grandmother, Charlotte Coffin, for outstanding accomplishments. Wedding silver bearing the date 1811 was the gift to William and Charlotte Gardner.

For Mrs. Ruth Chadwick McLean, Miss Gardner brought a spoon inscribed B. E. M., and belonging to Miss Morseland, who, blind from birth, married Charles Henry Chase, also blind. They were a well-known couple on Nantucket.

Mrs. Charles Amey had spoons once belonging to Phoebe and Ann Mitchell. She also had a fork, a bequest to her mother from an aunt who lived on Nantucket. The fork had the word "Mother" engraved on the front and the name "Ann" on the back. Familiar with the piece from early childhood, imagine her chagrin to find

"Father" fork at a nephew's home many, many years later.

A cherished heirloom was a set of silver teaspoons and a ladle, belonging to Cyrus and Nancy Hussey, dated 1850, and again inscribed 1905, to mark another wedding. This was a part of Mrs. Rhoda Gardner's exhibit.

Norman Griffin displayed a spoon bearing the letters M. P. and attributed to Margaret Pinkham who married Dr. Tupper in the year 1769. He also showed sugar tongs wrought by Benjamin Bunker, engraved R. M. C., a wedding gift to Richard and Margaret Carey.

Birth spoons in Mrs. Mary Dittmars' collection, bore dates, 1859, marking the arrival of Mary Swift Coffin, and another dated 7/20/1816 was initialed M. C. C. An unusual long handled "stuffing spoon" was also in her exhibit.

From the E. E. Coleman treasures were a silver ornament, probably used as a needleholder, and sewn on a dress apron to speed up the quilting bee; a silver finger guard, worn on the little finger to prevent chafing and cutting while the buttonhole tugged at the strong thread. Also a cane topped with a whalebone knob and a silver band bore the evidence that it was in use from 1682-1862. These were shown by Mrs. Jones.

A unique and fine piece of early American silver, attributed to the Baltimore silversmith, John Davenport, was a very large ladle, bowl and beautifully arched handle exquisitely cast in one piece, and dated 1799. This was shown by Dr. Gardner.

A real delight was the Coffin spoon shown by C. Clark Coffin. Micajah Coffin's silver knee buckles, inherited by his grandson, were wrought into a long handled spoon and inscribed with the initials of Coffins, from Micajah to the present owner. The handle is crowded with names.

Not of such antiquity but of interest, was a silver pickle fork, a wedding gift to his pupils Dr. and Mrs. Gardner on their marriage by their former teacher, Mr. Fox of the Coffin School. (Well remembered by some of his former pupils even though not recipients of his prize.) The fork had at the handle tip, a raised fox head.

Mrs. Jones showed a silver charm in the shape of a coffin, or casket, duly engraved with the lover's names and a tribute to the profundity with which the Nantucketers accepted the words, "Til death do us part."

Mrs. Seddon W. Legg Sr. exhibited a table spoon with the hall-mark of RE, which members thought might be of Paul Revere.

A pair of table spoons of the Sanford and Easton era belonging to an ancestor was shown by Alcon Chadwick.

Also exhibiting silver collections were; Mrs. Kent K. King, Miss Gladys Wood, Mrs. Joseph King and Clinton Andrews.

As the meeting came to a close, a touching story was told. Before her arrival into this vale of tears, her relatives were of a difference of opinion to the point of feud. The baby brought the family together. As a token of peace, "six old family silver spoons" were melted down and wrought into one birth spoon. A goodly sacrifice of Nantucketa was offered. But the price of peace was never cheap, either between families or nations.

Mar. 6, 1919

## Nantucket Years 'Rolled Back' As Annual 'Gam' Reminisces About Island 'Celebrities'

They didn't merely turn back the clock, they rolled back the years last Friday evening at the Maria Mitchell Library as some 75 members and guests of the Nantucket Historical Association sat enthralled at tales of Nantucketers of the past whose feats have enshrined them among the Island's celebrities.

The occasion, of course, was the Historical Association's 11th annual gam and Dr. Will Gardner, to whom the meeting was turned over by President George W. Jones, set the pattern for the program when he explained that the term "celebrity" isn't always

or even necessarily, a flattering one—that it might also include the notorious or frivolous.

Pointing out that candidates for discussion were to be confined to those of deceased Nantucketers since 1800. Dr. Gardner emphasized that living celebrities would provide the topics for future games and suggested, "Just for this evening, let's allow Maria Mitchell and Walter Folger to rest and confine ourselves to some less widely known figures in our past."

Taking their cue from Dr. Gardner, who had mentioned that whaling captains, town criers and even murderers might be included in the definition of celebrities, and responding with enthusiasm to comments and suggestions offered by committee members, the audience was in a plainly nostalgic mood as the name of first one and then another Islander of

(Continued on Page 3)

yesteryear came popping up from memory lane.

Dr. Gardner, himself, started the ball rolling when he mentioned Dr. Zaccheus Macy, who delivered more than 2,000 babies during the course of his career as a general practitioner on Nantucket. "There was hardly anybody on the Island, at one time, who wasn't delivered by Dr. Macy," the venerable minister-historian remarked.

The transition from the name of Dr. Macy to that of Dr. Benjamin Sharp, a practitioner whose first love was zoology and who taught in the Nantucket schools, was a natural one and mention of his educational contributions promptly led to the introduction of the name of Cyrus Peirce, for whom the present elementary school is named.

"Cyrus Peirce," Edouard Stackpole, past president of the Historical Association, told the audience, "was not only a great schoolteacher, but probably the greatest school administrator that the Island ever has had. He had two mottoes, 'Do good and be good' and 'Love to tell the truth'."

"Although he was a stern disciplinarian," Mr. Stackpole continued, "he didn't believe in corporal punishment. It was his advocacy of public schools, however, which helped to sway Samuel Jenks and in turn lead to the establishment of public education on Nantucket."

over



## Art of Nantucket Silversmiths Subjects of 1959 Gam

Some 30 persons gathered at the Maria Mitchell Library on Friday evening, February 27, for the 10th Winter Gam of the Nantucket Historical Association, bringing with them many unique and interesting pieces of family silver. In most cases the articles had been fashioned by Nantucket silversmiths and in some cases dated back to the 17th century. Some pieces have been marked for so many generations of heirs there is scarcely room to add present descendants.

This "silver gam" had been sponsored and arranged by Dr. Will Gardner with the assistance of Mrs. George A. Folger, Mrs. George Jones, Mrs. Joseph King, and Miss Cora Stevens.

Expressing the regrets of all that Dr. Gardner was unable to attend Mr. George Jones, President of the Historical Association, presided, and introduced each member who presented their choice silver pieces and related the family history, amusing or sad tale, which was associated with the family possession.

The first large silver ladle with heavy stem and bowl of one piece, with graceful drop back handle and probably wrought by John Davenport between 1790 and 1810, has long been a family treasure of Dr. Gardner's.

A beautiful porringer marked "L. B. Mitchell, 1847," and a large spoon, which first belonged to Mrs. Grace Elkins Huttaff's great-grandmother in 1790, was shown by Mrs. Folger, and also two tiny salt spoons fashioned by Pitman. These were to have been given

## Art of Nantucket Silversmiths Subjects of 1959 Gam

(Continued from Page One)

to a young lady as an engagement present by Dr. Folger's great-grandfather. However, the couple went picnicking on Tuckernuck and, on the return trip the boat capsized, the lady was lost, and the gift never presented.

Mrs. Seddon Legg brought spoons by Easton and Paul Revere (probably) which have been handed down in her family. Mrs. Jones showed spoons wrought by George Cannon, a wedding present to Daniel and Hilda Bunker Coffin in 1790.

Miss Gladys Wood told of "silver" hunting jaunts to America and showed the spoon she obtained. This was plainly marked, "E. J. Easton, Nantucket," and has the initials "JRG" and could easily have belonged to a Gardner who built the house Miss Wood has restored! Mrs. Kent King showed the E. and J. Kelley spoons which are family treasures, and Mrs. Whittemore Gardner brought the fine Easton and Sanford spoon handed down to her grandmother. Mrs. Gardner also showed four tined forks of French design, family possessions for generations.

Mr. Norman Giffin showed the Samuel Barrett teaspoons marked "M.P." belonging to Margaret Pinkham Coffin, 1769; the Benjamin Bunker tongs, the soup ladle by John Pearson, (N.Y. 1791), and the tablespoon marked "S.P." (Samuel Phillips), Salem, Mass., 1680.

Many beautiful pieces were shown by Mrs. John Ditmars. Spoons marked "H.A." and "E. J. Kelley," others by Easton and Sanford who had their

shop at 62 Main Street in 1816. The large cake basket and "stuffing spoon" came to her from Jared Coffin.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner brought several articles with fascinating histories. The Easton and Sanford spoon marked "BEM," an heirloom of Mrs. Ruth Chadwick McLean's was made for Miss Morselander who lived on Orange Street and taught children unable to pay fees. Miss Morselander was blind but studied Braille and was apt at reading. She married Charles Henry Chase, also blind, and though they never saw one another, lived happily for years on Milk Street.

Spoons by "J. Easton 2nd. Nantucket Pure Coin" belonging to Miss Gardner's grandparents, Benjamin Bunker spoons, J. Easton spoons, and a Hadwen spoon, a wedding present to Miss Gardner's grandmother in 1811, were exhibited. She showed a tiny snuff box which reads on the cover, "A pinch of this is better than a kiss." In the box is a tonka bean which flavored the snuff! Miss Gardner also showed the miniature silver harp which, in 1834, had been presented to her grandmother, Charlotte Coffin, as the high ranking scholar in Nantucket schools.

Mrs. Alice P. Amey brought several fine family pieces which belonged to the Mitchell sisters, Phoebe and Ann. The latter married Alfred Macy and lived in the Block on Orange Street. A tiny square-cut salt spoon by Kelley, a ladle by Pitman, and a dinner fork marked "Mother." Its mate was lost until Mrs. Amey visited a relative, a descendant of the Mitchells. The young man was a flier in World War I, married a Hungarian girl, and in his home Mrs. Amey found the fork marked "Father"!

Mr. Alcon Chadwick had the fine Easton and Sanford spoon made in 1830 for his great-grandparents, William and Ruth Brooks, as a wedding present. Mr. Clinton Andrews showed three finely fashioned spoons by E. and J. Kelley, and one by "J. Easton Nantucket Pure Coin" which came through his grandmother whose father was a brother of J. Easton the silversmith.

A Kelley spoon belonging to Miss Elsie Jernegan was shown and a Samuel Barrett tiny salt spoon which was found when an old fireplace in her house was removed.

A silver spoon, the family heirloom of Charles Clark Coffin, made from the silver buckles of Micajah Coffin, was viewed.

Mr. Jones presented for Dr. Gardner a pickle fork marked on the front "Fox" and on the back "MWG," a present from Mr. Fox, teacher of the Coffin School, to Mrs. Gardner when she and Dr. Will were married in 1898.

Mrs. Jones told the story of several unique family treasures. The first a silver nipple with tiny pipeline which came to Mrs. Charlotte King from her grandmother Riddle and may have been on sale in their store, for attached to it is the price tag, \$3. A strange, finely wrought, tiny gadget, handed down in Mrs. Jones' family, was called by her grandfather, "A whim-wham for a geese's bridle." Its actual use remains doubtful.

The 1959 Gam closed on a most enjoyable note with a birthday song for Miss Grace Brown Gardner who was celebrating the day, and with a word of thanks to all for making this 10th Gam a history making event.

Aside from his duties as a Unitarian minister, Mr. Stackpole said, Mr. Peirce also taught at what was then called the Normal School and at one time delivered a series of lectures at the Nantucket Athenaeum. One of the lectures, he related, was entitled "Entertaining evenings in Algiers."

"Yes," interjected Miss Grace Brown Gardner, "and we might add that Cyrus Peirce is buried at the Prospect Hill Cemetery and on the back of his tombstone is an inscription which reads 'Erected by his Normal Pupils,' a contribution which drew a resounding peal of laughter from the audience."

"Who," asked Miss Gardner, "can remember hearing of Black Annie Gardner? She was a great abolitionist," she continued in reply to a query from the floor, "and she was called Black Annie because she taught the colored children in the South."

"She was so highly regarded that when she left them they gave her a silver spoon engraved with the initials A.G. and I think that it is very touching that it was a plated spoon rather than a sterling silver one. It was simply the best they could afford."

"Then," offered Dr. Gardner, "there was Will Baxter, a retired whaler who became a highly popular cab driver. He'd meet all the boats down at the Steamship Wharf and somehow he could always tell the newlyweds when he saw them getting off the boat."

"He used to pretend to be deaf," Dr. Gardner chuckled, "and after he'd said 'Huh' a couple of times, the young couple would think so too. As a result, old Will used to get quite a kick out of listening to the lovemaking as he drove them all the way to the hotel in Sconset."

Neither J. E. Crawford, the well known colored barber, nor Charles O'Connor, one of the town's greatest benefactors, although somewhat eccentric, escaped mention either. "Mr. O'Connor," Mrs. George W. Jones related, "used to spell his name with one 'N' and one time when someone asked him why, he said: 'Well, you see I'm descended from the Irish kings and did you ever hear of an Irish king who could make both 'N's meet?'"

Many of those present at the gam had vivid recollections of Miss Anne Ring, who taught school to successive generations of Nantucketers and also had the distinction of teaching in the only school which Tuckernuck ever had: and still others chuckled at

reminiscences of Elisha Pope Fearing Gardner, the whimsical bard of Poet's Corner, who placarded the fence around his property with rhymes.

The tragic figure of Patience Cooper, who "felled Phoebe Fuller with a fid" and spent ten years doing punishment for a crime of which half the town felt she was not guilty, and the more heroic characters of Captain Charles Grant, one of Nantucket's most successful whaling masters, and Captain Walter Chase of the Coskata Lifesaving Station also came in for their share of attention, as did that of navigator Owen Spencer, famed for his discovery of Sunset latitude.

Perhaps the most popular figure mentioned though, if smiles and laughter of the audience could be taken as any criterion, was that of Hannah Sheffield, one of the more robust lady merchants of Petticoat Row, whose efforts at bicycle riding furnished some of the brightest anecdotes of the era of which she was a part.

Hannah, like any woman, was not without vanity, according to Mrs. Joseph King, and one of the more ludicrous episodes in her career was when she demanded that she and her bike be placed in front of a mirror so that she could get a rear view of how she looked riding down the street.

With such a wide range of subjects, there was hardly one to which some person in the audience could not contribute some item of interest and among those participating, aside from Dr. Gardner and Mr. Jones, were Edouard Stackpole, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, Mrs. George W. Jones, Charles Sayle, Norman Giffin, Kent King, Mrs. Joseph King, Mrs. Walton H. Adams and Thomas J. Kennedy.

March 6, 1959

March 14, 1960



## A Gam Is a "Whale" Of a Lot of Fun

The Nantucket Historical Association had a mid-winter "Gam" on Friday evening, February 26, at the library of the Maria Mitchell Association, where about 80 people met for the express purpose of discussing "Our Island Celebrities"—who they were and why they were talked about.

It was really great fun, and those who attended were rewarded by a semi-formal evening of anecdote and eulogies which was recorded for posterity by the modern touch of a tape recorder in the hands of the President, Mr. George Jones.

In the days when there were many ships sailing out of Nantucket Harbor to all the seven seas, it was quite the thing to have a "Gam" when the ships from home happened to meet while on cruise. The ships would draw up along side each other and the captains, their crew — and even the captain's wives, if they happened to be aboard — would have a gabfest known as a "Gam." The word comes from whaling, for a group of the creatures was known as "Gam" — much as several lions are known as a "pride."

Dr. Will Gardner, Miss Grace Brown Gardner, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Nancy Adams, were the committee, and Mr. Edouard Stackpole, who was visiting from Mystic Seaport, shared the honors of the "head table", so to speak.

Dr. Will broke the ice with a story about some young people who during a scavenger hunt in the summer, had come to his home seeking the name of the Quaker setter-of-bones. He said young people are interested in historical figures if they have special stories connected with them. He explained that it is newsprint which makes a person a celebrity whether for good or ill, and that not all of our celebrities have been of a savory character.

It was noteworthy, during the evening that one story touched off another as the names of various characters came to light. Miss Harwood mentioned Dr. Benjamin Sharp, the biologist, which brought forth the story from Dr. Will about the girl in Dr. Sharp's class, when shown how the blood went down the arteries of the right leg, was asked "then what happens to it?" and she replied, "It went up the other!"

As Edouard Stackpole was present, the panel gave him an opportunity to bring out his favorite subject for discussion, who proved to be Cyrus Peirce (pronounced "purse") the great educator, whose special precepts were "Do good and be good" and "Love to tell the truth." Cyrus Peirce was trained as a Unitarian minister, and held a church in North Reading. Maria Mitchell studied under him, as did Mary Swift, who later worked at Perkins Institute for the Blind.

The first school where Peirce taught was a private one in "the Block" on Orange Street, charging \$10 a quarter. He tried to motivate and inspire his students as well as teach them subject matter. He was married to a Coffin and was brother-in-law to Samuel Haynes Jenks, the editor of the Inquirer and Mirror. Together these gentlemen worked toward the establishment of the public school system on the island.

As a speaker at the first meeting of the board of education, Cyrus Peirce was heard by Horace Mann

## A Gam Is a "Whale" Of a Lot of Fun

(Continued from Page One)

who was evidently impressed. When it was decided to try to have a Normal School for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, they sent for Cyrus Peirce to be the first principal. There he labored for five years before retiring. Our school in Nantucket which houses the first six grades for the south end of town was named for him.

Miss Grace Brown Gardner mentioned that his remains are interred in the Prospect Hill Cemetery with the inscription on the back "erected by his normal pupils!"

Another school teacher mentioned was "Black Annie" Gardner, so-called because of her adherence to abolition and the fact that she taught colored children down south after the Civil War. Some others whose names arose were, the Chases, a blind couple who lived up on the Cliff; Elwell Jenks, who wrote obituaries and poetry; Captain Billie Baxter, who, pretending deafness, had a sly old time taking newly-wed couples out to 'Sconset in his "stage" at a leisurely trot, enjoying their billing and cooing. He didn't neglect to let 'em know he could hear when they got to their destination. No doubt about it — "he was a caution," as they say in Nantucket.

Mr. Thomas Kennedy told at length

of his fun in ferreting out the details of the murder of Phoebe Fuller by a fid in the hands of Patience Cooper. This was the only tale in modern vernacular throughout the evening. The most interesting part about it was that the Miltimores, who now own the house, had never been appraised of the gory tale. It came as quite a surprise to them, although many of their friends must have known the tale and refrained from telling it lest they should feel queer about it. The complete story of Patience Cooper was told in the Inquirer and Mirror on April 6, 1946, by Edouard A. Stackpole, when he presented a one-half page article describing the case in detail. Subsequently a booklet was printed, which contained all the facts which had been painstakingly unearthed by Mr. Stackpole, and copies of this booklet are doubtless still in existence.

With the tearing down of the great house known as the "Breckenridge Long" house, it was appropriate that the builder of this house should have come up for discussion. He was the Hon. Charles O'Connor, whose wealth is legendary. He is said to have paid off the town's debt a couple of times. His barber was a colored preacher by the name of the Rev. Crawford. Dr. Will related that, when he was a child and in the chair for a trim, the barber suddenly said, "Boy, get out. Here comes Mr. O'Connor." It is on

record that Mr. O'Connor left the barber something in his will, and, though Mr. Crawford never charged more than ten cents for a haircut, the tips of ten dollar bills were frequent from Mr. O'Connor.

When he was prosecuting a case in New York, it is said that three brothers, all of them in their eighties, had a case in his court. On asking them whence they came and being told "Nantucket" he said that was where he would like to live, and so he did!

The names of two well-known Nantucket poets came up. One was Elisha Pope Fearing Gardner, who operated an eccentric location near the entrance to the Prospect Hill Cemetery for many years. Old postal cards by Wyer show him in a hat surrounded by signs of all sorts such as, "Don't drink the water — there's a spring under the bed." The other poet was a lady better known perhaps for her playing of the "bones", Miss Helen McCleary. Mrs. Charlotte King read Mrs. McCleary's "Passing of Petticoat Row" which brought a picture to mind of the old-time shop keepers along that section of Centre Street, which became famous for the number of distaff proprietors.

This led to Hannah Sheffield and some uproariously funny stories about how she tried to learn to ride a bicycle. After landing in a hedge she put an ad in the local paper, "Female bicycle for sale." Mr. Norman Giffin told of escorting her home once, at the behest of his mother, stating that "she made the fastest passage" she probably ever experienced. He told of the boat captains who often held the boat if they saw a late comer speeding toward the wharf and how disgusted the captain was, of holding the ship one day to find it was just Hannah rushing to mail a letter!

The story of the brave rescue off the Rose and Crown Shoals by Captain Walter Chase gave rise to several stories of his bravery and personality.

Mrs. Nancy Grant Adams told of

her grandfather Captain Grant who was in the trade longer than any other captain. Her own father was born in Samoa and he was the first custodian of the Whaling Museum. He is reputed to have been brought aboard the whaling ship wrapped in a banana leaf, at the age of three weeks.

Captain Owen Spooner, who discovered what is known as "Sunset Longitude," was mentioned. Grace Brown Gardner has a portrait of him in her living room, with the identification of all the articles in the old oil painting listed on the back of it.

At Mr. Jones' request Edouard Stackpole related his discovery of the first claiming of Antarctica as a conti-



Shown above are two views of the audience and participants in the Nantucket Historical Association's ninth annual "Winter Gam," held last Friday evening.

Over



ment in the log book of a "sealer" in the ship "Huntress." He had found his romantic detail when he un-glued pictures from the pages of the log which had been used as a scrap book. Through the studies of Mr. Stackpole, the United State government was able to claim them during the world War II for bases to use.

It was good to have the only junior citizen, Bryan King, get up and prove Dr. Will Gardner's first premise about stories, by telling the one about Billy Bowen carting trash.

During the evening everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to Miss Grace Brown Gardner who is justly famous for her fine scrap books of Nantucket.

She was "about to become eighty" — not eighty-five, as some say — and we all admire her, whatever her age.

To conclude the evening, Mr. Jones read a prepared article on Anne Ring, that fine old-school type of teacher who helped to train hundreds of Nantucket youths. She rose to special prominence, being the only woman member of the Selectmen of Nantucket in its history — and she made a good one. She said she got educated thereby.

The "Gam" was fun, and an education too. It is a popular way to get together those who have the preservation of the antiquities of the island at heart.

March 4, 1960



## Nantucket's Annual "Gam" Thoroughly Enjoyable

Many of the younger generation were present at the "gam" which took place at the Maria Mitchell Library on last Friday evening, under the auspices of the Nantucket Historical Association.

They were privileged to hear a great many rich anecdotes and stories about the olden days in the neighborhoods about town, with the characters who people them, as told by the old-timers themselves. There were many octogenarians and, luckily, it was only a pea soup fog which was encountered instead of the mean old rainstorm which developed the next day. Somehow the weather set the pace as we looked backward into the dimness of the past to recall to mind old friends and old scenes of the childhood memories gathered there.

It was good to get a recording of the whole procedure through the kindness of Mr. Terry and his tape recorder. George Jones, as the President of the Historical Association was in the chair, flanked by Mrs. Walton Adams and Dr. Will Gardner, whose remarks set the tone for the evening.

Dr. Gardner told about Orange Street for that was always his stamping grounds from the time he was 12. First he had us picture his Uncle Cromwell coming down out of the Watch Tower of the Unitarian Church. This is the proper nomenclature for the edifice and it should be understood that it was built for the express purpose of watching for the returning vessels and to watch out for the ever-present danger of fire. He said the holes up there were for telescopes to poke out through and not just for the horn to be blown in case of fire or disaster. It makes very good sense. There was a long streamer which flew from the mast of each vessel as it returned to port if there was no one dead amongst the crew which had left on the voyage. Needless to say it was anxiously anticipated and the watch was alert to notice whose ship flag was approaching as well. As we pass the church and hear its Portuguese bell daily, it is a wonderful thing to think of men standing watch through a whole century.

Dr. Will spoke of how many hostleries were in one locality, including the Veranda House and the Sherborn House. The Rev. Louisa Baker lived nearby, Miss Barnard the librarian, Winslow's ice cream parlor, and next door, the undertakers! He spoke of rooms renting at 25 cents a night and 35 at the outside! Julia Urann interspersed a picture of a stuffed gull in the ice cream parlor and how the (devilish) boys used to pelt it with ice cream. Dr. Will said he remembered how his heart trembled the first time he took his girl friend in to buy ice cream — an experience common to us all.

Julia Urann, whose father was the Max Wagner for whom the lower square of Main Street with its fountain is named, came down from Middleboro just for the Gam. She has a good store of tales about olden times and a retentive memory which brings back whole conversations.

She confined herself to a few anecdotes on 'Sconset in 1900 — telling about the lamplighter, going for water at the town pump (which had a lock on it if any typhoid was abroad), the time the train engineer got excited and went right into a house instead of backing up by the bridge. She told about the wreck of the *Jane Palmer* (?) in 1905 when the shipwrecked folk came ashore in a longboat, including the Captain's wife and child with a kitten, and a musician holding his cello.

She is a born story-teller, and those who get a chance to hear some of her Nantucket ones are lucky.

The surprise of the evening came when Grace Brown Gardner, who is so well known for her scrap books revealed that she had written a book long ago. She had kept it a secret — but the title of the evening's Gam being "Neighborhoods" she decided to break it out and read the chapter which dealt with her childhood neighborhood out Milk Street way.

It was most interesting, and it is hoped that she can be persuaded to have it published as is — if that chapter was a good example of her work.

She told of the ropewalks across from the cemetery; a lady famous for herbs who dealt out jamaica ginger, rhubarb, and castor oil when the children needed them. Then there were the blind Chases (Mrs. Chase used to thread her needle with her tongue, so said Zetta Boyer). She spoke of walking the cemetery fence, the generosity of neighbors in a pinch, the curls made from shingle shavings, and the children of the jailor. Once she even ate there — and a prisoner joined them. The latter were not considered "Neighbors"!

Mention of the Big Shop, where Jimmie Glidden now lives, brought to mind an ancient parrot and the cost of coffins which were made there at \$5 for adults and \$2.50 for children.

Norman Giffin's "neighborhood" was around Hussey Street, which was then unpaved. He used to sift the ashes from the house stove there every day and remembers the heap which accumulated there. He remembered climbing up into Dr. Coleman's loft and finding a pair of false teeth marked "Susan Bailey's" in a box. He recalled the smell of the pigsty from the schoolroom window in the spring and playing games of "fox and geese" and marbles.

Nancy Adams' old stamping grounds included Fair Street. Ned Fitzgerald's Rum Show was right near the Women's Christian Temperance Union! There were pumps where you could help yourself to a dipper of water as you passed. You had to be careful not to lose a rubber in the mud on Mulberry Street, which, of course, was unpaved.

Zetta Boyer told about the delightful gardens of the Sanford House and what fun they had playing in the swing down by the present town building. Pigs were stied where Pease's Garage is now. She told of Mr. Hosier's candies — the slippery elm bark, lozenges, and colt's foot candy. He used to please the children by hiding a little treasure in a box for them to ferret out.

## Nantucket's Annual "Gam" Thoroughly Enjoyable

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It was interesting to have June Artlett take us on a tour of the rms of the south part of town out ward the Hummock, with a stopover Lisha Pope "Interfering" Gardner's et's Corner on the way.

Rozelle Jones, who was Dr. Coleman's daughter, took us for a walk down and up Centre Street with vivid descriptions of the people who kept shop on Petticoat Row. There was Hannah Sheffield, brief and to the point; Mr. Ridell's son with the first electric train she'd ever seen; the old dy on the corner in the now-Stanley house, scooping coal at midnight into a furnace with an oatmeal box using a fitful candle to light her way; the store lady on whose black apron she placed their foot while trying on her wares; the "Penny Devilish" canies in striped paper sacks; torpedoes or Fourth of July; a hat shop, the Roberts' House, Quaker meeting and the fire house, where Dr. Menges now has his office, the kids used to line up in the fence and watch the tryouts of the steam fire engines.

The only paved street was Centre and she made you hear the horses' hooves as they turned off into the softer earth from the cloddy paving.

Electricity for the street lights was confined to the hours of 4-11, and none on moonlit nights!

Oh, those were the days!

George Burgess and Mrs. Amey reminisced, and Gladys Wood told of the vicissitudes of early hotel experiences when she first came to the island.

The evening was all too short, and it would be wonderful if some of the stories could be told which were withheld that evening through bashfulness or lack of time. It set many people thinking of olden times, and we all went away with a nostalgic feeling that we had had a peek into the past.

The Congdon family lived in the present Royal Manor. Open orchards were in the vicinity. The children took out library books on Saturdays because "Father owned a share" there.

Dr. Will told of getting weighed at Hosier's store and the gentleman would mark the weight on the soles of the boy's feet and then say, "Now, boy, walk home on your heels."

There were some fine horses in town and there would be excitement when one ran away. Zetta's father kept horses, and he told a timid pair of ladies not to let the rein get under the tail. It is said that they were caught in a shower, and the horse was returned with the young ladies holding an umbrella over the horse's tail end!

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## 13th Annual "Gam" Last Friday Sponsored by Historical Ass'n

Most Nantucketers know that a "gam" means a group of people getting together to "chat." It is a distinctly Nantucket expression, coming from "gam," meaning a herd of whales, or, in whalemens parlance, a meeting between two ships on the high seas, when captains, their wives, and the seamen exchanged news and stories. The captains and their wives (if on board) often used "gaming chairs" hoisted on breeches-buoy type of rigging to effect interchange between ships.

It is natural, then, that a gab-fest of old-time Nantucketers, held under the auspices of the Nantucket Historical Association, should be called a "gam." The one held last Friday evening, at the Maria Mitchell Library, had "Stores that I Remember," as its subject for discussion.

President George Jones introduced Past President Nancy Adams, and Miss Grace Brown Gardner from the head table and explained that Herbert Terry was making a tape recording of the whole affair.

Stories came to mind thick and fast after Mr. Jones got the ball rolling by recounting his experiences working at Henry Brown's hardware store. He spoke of "Dottie," Henry Brown's dog and told about Mr. Brown, who was a cigar smoker, and who occasionally bit off a bit from a cigar to chew. "Dottie" liked to chew, too, and would stand on her head to beg for it. Mr. Brown must have been a kind man, because he didn't explode when young George broke the stock of his favorite gun, but instead glued it together

(Continued on Page Two)

with such perfection you couldn't see the break!

Nancy Adams spoke of two stores on Upper Main Street, near the Monument, a bake shop and Horace Coleman's store. It was the Charlotte Rousse of the former which made her mouth water in retrospect.

Mrs. Alice Amey told of George Wendell Macy, employed at Brown's Hardware, who was asked to "charge it" by a stranger. He did so. Shortly afterward, the man returned to the store and said to the clerk: "I didn't give you my name." "Oh, that's all right," said Macy, "I've got you down here." Over Macy's shoulder, the man could see the notation: "Charged to the cross-eyed man."

Norman Giffin told about Uncle Walter, known as Cap'n Chase, who had a small grindstone in the store. He'd say to an unsuspecting passerby, "Turn this for me." They would turn it and, under his direction, make it go faster and faster, until he would touch a match to it and light up his cigar!

Norman worked in the Union Store in his youth — especially because of the food sold there. He doubted if his efforts showed much profit. He said the "Peroxa Sarsaparilla" down cellar hadn't sold all summer, but it was all gone at the end of the season! Norman also enjoyed the Canton ginger.

He recalled the time the horse "Old Mahoney" broke his shafts on the way to a picnic out Polpis way, and how Bob Mooney's grandfather used his wife's clothesline to patch up the rig. Because the Union Store opened at 6 a.m., people often dropped in to buy "groceries for breakfast." Norman was paid \$6 a week during July, and \$8 during August. He said "Commarunnin' Smith" got his name from the way he responded to the fire signal.

There were three canisters of tea on the shelf of the Union Store, marked 40c lb., 50c lb., and 60c lb., respectively. "But," said Norman, "they all came out of the same big chest down cellar!"

Days of the meat auctions on lower Main Street were recalled. They were at Myrick's and Moore's — and you took your purchases home on a skewer, flies and all, in "the days before germs were invented." Sometimes you paid more than you would have in a regular store, but you had the fun of the auction.

There was a store on Gardner Street where the youngsters could get weighed on their way to school or the outdoor grain scale. Miss Grace Brown Gardner said the pickles there were so big "you could pass them around."

Whittemore Gardner's light-colored molasses was well remembered, and Todd's Candy Kitchen, with the sign "Don't forget the little ones at home."

Thoughts of 'Sconset brought forth memories of Larry Welch who, it was said, sized up the summer visitors at the beginning, and charged them by the season! Morris' Ice Cream Parlor was recalled, where the ice cream was "sold by the glass."

W. Ripley Nelson had brought an old sign to the meeting, which read, "Groceries by Benjamin Folger." He told of his efforts to identify the store where the sign would have hung. The results of his search showed the sign to be over 100 years old and "probably was used either in a store on Middle Pearl Street or on Main Street." Exact identification could not be made in the short time he had to work on it, but Mr. Nelson indicated in his remarks that he had enjoyed his search and had unearthed much history in the process.

It came to light, in the discussion, in the old Masons' building on Main Street, opposite the end of Fair Street, there was once a "Women's Exchange" where fudge, bread, chowder, pies, and other home-style articles were sold. Charlotte King observed that, in those days, everyone made her own bread, and would be sure to conceal a loaf purchased at a store, if she was caught short, as she would be embarrassed to be seen bringing home a "store bought" loaf.

Everyone agreed to let the memory of Hannah Sheffield rest for the evening, since she had been discussed in previous "gams," and stories about her could fill an evening by themselves.

At Jack West's barber shop there was a practical jokester who used to shave one half of a customer's face and then find an excuse to send him out on a "fool's errand." Barber Holdgate once lathered up youthful Walton Adams, and then sat down in a chair. When young Adams wanted to

know why he did that, the barber replied, "I'm waitin' for the hair to grow!"

There was mention of Chenelworth's "Curiosity Shop" on Middle Pearl Street, where a fine painting of the "Wreck of the T. B. Witherspoon" was the outstanding exhibit for years. He sold "quart bowls, all sizes."

"Junie" Bartlett identified all the stores, up and down Main Street, which stood there early in the century. He recalled that there were two "movie houses," one upstairs on the north side of Main Street. He said

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Congdon's Pharmacy is the only one left in its original stand.

One grocery store owner used to slice his potatoes to arrive at the exact weight!

When Bill Holland's grocery store eventually wound up with the A&P on one side and the First National on the other, "Bill" threatened to put up a sign over his own establishment reading "Main Entrance."

"Forty" Day had a "kind of second-hand store" at 40 Orange Street. It included a "sort of pawn shop" and he gave you 40 days to pay up the loan!

Herman Crocker, on Centre Street, sold "poor cheese for 7c a lb."

Marriott Fisher King told of finding the doorstep of the Hussey Weaving Shop, once situated off Gardner Street, where carpets were made out of odds and ends during the winter. Miss Ann Ring had told Marriott of remembering sitting on the granite slab as a child. When the Kings unearthed it in the backyard, they put it to use as a hearthstone!

There were numerous "thread 'n' needle" shops about town in Ladies' homes, and penny candy stores, in similar surroundings. Someone named Cox sold milk from his back stoop, and the original "Riser" Marks got his name from selling yeast cakes, door to door.

Zimri Coffin sold "Thorough soap from Los Angeles (Los Angeles)." He used to say, "My wife took a bath in Thorough Soap and came out a new woman!"

Hulled corn was once sold house to house, as was horse radish. One man sold eggs imported from the Vineyard as "fresh eggs" and, when someone asked him just how many hens he had, he replied, "I can't begin to count them."

The 13th Annual Gam furnished a most interesting evening, and the stories whispered in asides were among the funniest of all. It is a priceless experience to have the old times come alive as the "old timers" relive their memories aloud.



